THE ALDINE READERS

A THIRD READER

SPAULDING & BRYCE

William Snodgrass

CLOS' BOOK STORE
Booksellers and Stationers,
Twin Falls, Idaho.

THE ALDINE READERS

A THIRD READER

By

Frank E. Spaulding

Superintendent of Schools, Newton, Mass.

and

Catherine T. Bryce

Supervisor of Primary Schools, Newton, Mass.

With Illustrations by

Margaret Ely Webb

NEW YORK

NEWSON & COMPANY, PUBLISHERS

Copyright, 1908, by
NEWSON & COMPANY.

All rights reserved.

1401

PREFACE

This book is intended for children who have already learned how to read, who have so mastered the mechanics of reading that they can read readily anything that they can understand. It is intended primarily for children who have learned to read by the use of the three preceding books of this series; it is suited, however, to any child of seven to ten years of age who has learned to read, no matter by what method or lack of method.

Children who have already acquired a real taste for reading, as few children fail to do in learning to read by the use of the Aldine Primer, the First and the Second Readers, will find here the material not only for gratifying that taste, but for enlarging and strengthening it; those who, for any reason, have not the reading taste, can hardly read this book without developing that taste. Stories, poems, and illustrations are full of action, full of appeal to the childish imagination. Everything is alive, is personified; the moon, the wind, the rain, the grass, the seeds, the trees and flowers, as well as the children and simple people, the animals and the fairies, all live

and speak the language of the child's heart and imagination. Dry, didactic selections, introduced simply for the sake of conveying information, have been given no place; such material does not belong in a school reading book.

All the principles on which good reading depends, principles which are fully discussed in the *Teacher's Manual* which accompanies this series of Readers, have been carefully observed in the preparation of this book. These principles should be equally observed in its use. Teachers are advised to make thoughtful study of this *Manual*, "Learning to Read."

The authors are pleased to make grateful acknowledgment for kindly granted permission to use selections as follows: to Messrs. Houghton, Mifflin & Co. for Edith M. Thomas's poem, "Talking in their Sleep," and Edna Dean Proctor's poem, "Good Night"; to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for Stevenson's poem, "The Wind"; to Messrs. Dodd, Mead & Co. and to Mr. Charles D. Higgins, Executor, for Paul Laurence Dunbar's poem, "Merry Autumn"; to Susan Hartley Swett for "The Blue Jay"; to Oliver Herford for "The Elf and the Dormouse"; and to Marie Van Vorst for "The Piper."

CONTENTS

		PAGE
PIPER STORIES		1
The Piper	*Marie Van Vorst*	3
Johnny Cake	*Joseph Jacobs*	4
Guessing Song	*Henry Johnstone*	10
The Stars in the Sky	*Joseph Jacobs*	12
Answer to a Child's Question	*S. T. Coleridge*	19
The Peddler's Pack		20
The Ant and the Cricket		27
IN THE DAYS OF FAIRIES		29
The Fairy Wand — Part I		31
The Fairy Wand — Part II		34
The Fairy Wand — Part III		36
The Fairy Wand — Part IV		39
The Fairy Wand — Part V		43
Where go the Boats	*R. L. Stevenson*	49
Luck and Wealth	*An Hungarian Tale*	50
Winter Nights	*Mary F. Butts*	61
Windy Nights	*R. L. Stevenson*	63
Up and Down	*George Macdonald*	64
HOW SO STORIES		65
The Golden Cups — Part I		67
The Golden Cups — Part II		71

		PAGE
The Golden Cups — Part III		76
The Voice of the Grass	*Mary Howitt*	80
The Elf and the Dormouse	*Oliver Herford*	82
The Wind and the Moon	*George Macdonald*	85
How the Robin got his Red Breast		89
The Sprite of the Mill — Part I		95
The Sprite of the Mill — Part II		105
Robin Redbreast	*William Allingham*	114
The Cherry Tree	*Björnstjerne Björnson*	117
THAT'S WHY STORIES		119
The Thistle		121
The Wind in a Frolic	*William Howitt*	125
The King and the Tortoise		128
The Blue Jay	*Susan Hartley Swett*	132
The Throstle	*Tennyson*	134
Treasure Trove	*Goethe*	135
The Knight of the Silver Arrows		136
Young Dandelion	*Dinah M. Mulock*	145
The Silver Boat		149
Summer	*Christina Rossetti*	150
WHEN ANIMALS TALKED		151
The Tar Baby	*Frederick Ortoli*	153
Baby Seed Song		160
Talking in their Sleep	*Edith M. Thomas*	162
The Russet Dog	*Joseph Jacobs*	164
Merry Autumn	*Paul Laurence Dunbar*	173
The Fox, the Bear, and the Farmer	*A Hungarian Folk Story*	176
Flower Lullaby	*Addie Litchfield*	182
The Battle of the Beasts	*Grimm*	183

PAGE

THE FAIRY-TALE PRINCESS 193

The Princess whom Nobody could Silence . . . . . *A Norwegian Fairy Tale* . 195

Pussy Willow 203

The Story without an End — Part I 205

The Story without an End — Part II 209

Sir Robin 211

Fool's Luck . . . . . *A Hungarian Folk Story* . 216

The Swallow . . . . . *Christina Rossetti* . . 222

The Flying Trunk . . . . . *Andersen* 223

STORIES OF FORTUNE 237

The World's Reward . . . . *A Norwegian Fairy Tale* . 239

Jack Frost . . . . . *Gabriel Setoun* . . . 245

The Straw Ox . . . . . *A Cossack Fairy Tale* . . 248

March . . . . . *Jane E. Jones* . . . 257

Spring Heralded . . . . . *S. Q. Lapius* . . . 258

The Hardy Tin Soldier . . . . *Andersen* 260

Wishing . . . . . *William Allingham* . . 269

The Merry Rain 271

The Czar and the Angel . . . *A Cossack Fairy Tale* . 272

The Ferry for Shadowtown . . *Lillian D. Rice* . . . 285

Good Night . . . . . *Edna Dean Proctor* . . 287

PIPER
STORIES

THE PIPER

There's a strange, gaunt piper in doublet brown
  Comes over the heather and over the sea;
His dwelling is neither in city nor town,
  And he pipes for the wee little folk and me.

His hat is high and pointed and green,
  With a sprig in the band from the holly tree,
And his smile is the merriest ever seen
  In the eyes of the wee little folk and me.

He comes at the close of the winter days,
  As we sit in the firelight after tea;

He steals from the corner and smiles and plays
For the tired wee little folk and me.

And what are the tunes that the piper sings
As the strange pipe trembles with melody? —
I'd like to tell you the beautiful things
He tells to the wee little folk and me.

But they fade as soon as the piper goes
To take his journey o'er heather and sea.
Will he come again to us? Nobody knows.
Will you wait with the wee little folk and me?

— Marie van Vorst.

JOHNNY CAKE

Once upon a time there was an old man, and an old woman, and a little boy. One morning the old woman made a Johnny Cake, and put it into the oven to bake.

Then she said to the little boy: "You watch Johnny Cake while your father and I go out to work in the garden. Don't let it burn."

The little boy soon got tired watching the oven, and went to look out of the window. All of a sudden he heard a noise back of him. He looked around quickly. The oven door popped open.

Out jumped Johnny Cake. Away he went rolling along, end over end, through the open door, down the steps, and out into the road, long before the little boy could catch him.

"Mother! Father! Johnny Cake's running away!" cried the little boy, and down the street he ran after Johnny Cake.

His father and mother threw down their hoes and gave chase, too. But Johnny Cake outran all three a long way, and was soon out of sight.

The old man, the old woman, and the little boy, quite out of breath, sat down by the roadside to rest.

On ran Johnny Cake. By and by he came to two well diggers, who looked up from their work and called out, "Where are you going, Johnny?"

"I've outrun an old man, an old woman, and a little boy, and I can outrun you, too-o-o!"

"You can, can you? We'll see about that!" They threw down their spades and ran after him.

But Johnny Cake outstripped them, also. Seeing they could never catch him, they gave up.

On ran Johnny Cake. By and by he came to a bear.

"Where are you going, Johnny?" growled the bear.

"I've outrun an old man, an old woman, a little boy, and two well diggers, and I can outrun you, too-o!"

"You can, can you?" growled the bear; "we'll see about that!"

And he rushed thump, thump, after Johnny Cake, who never stopped to look behind him. Before long the bear was left far behind, so at last, breathless and panting, he stretched himself out by the roadside to rest.

On ran Johnny Cake. By and by he came to a wolf. "Where are you going, Johnny Cake?" yelped the wolf.

"I've outrun an old man, an old woman, a little boy, two well diggers, and a bear, and I can outrun you, too-o-o!"

"You can, can you?" snarled the wolf; "we'll see about that!" And he set into a gallop after Johnny Cake, who went on so fast that the wolf saw there was no hope of overtaking him, and he, too, lay down to rest.

On ran Johnny Cake. By and by he came to a fox that lay quietly in a corner of the fence.

"Where are you going, Johnny Cake?" called the fox, in a sharp voice, but without getting up.

"I've outrun an old man, an old woman, a little boy, two well diggers, a bear, and a wolf, and I can outrun you, too-o-o!"

"I can't quite hear you, Johnny Cake; won't you come a little closer?" said the fox.

Johnny Cake went a little nearer to the fox, and called out in a very loud voice: "I've outrun an old man, an old woman, a little boy, two well diggers, a bear, and a wolf, and I can outrun you, too-o-o!"

"Can't quite hear you; won't you come a little closer?" said the fox, in a feeble voice, as he put one paw behind his ear.

Johnny Cake came up quite close, and leaning towards the fox, screamed out, "I've outrun an old man, an old woman, a little boy, two well diggers, a bear, and a wolf, and I can outrun you, too-o-o!"

"You can, can you?" yelped the fox, and he snapped up Johnny Cake in a twinkling.

GUESSING SONG

Oh ho! oh ho! Pray, who can I be?
I sweep o'er the land, I scour o'er the sea;
I cuff the tall trees till they bow down their heads,
And I rock the wee birdies asleep in their beds.
Oh ho! oh ho! And who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

I rumple the breast of the gray-headed daw,
I tip the rook's tail up and make him cry "caw";
But though I love fun, I'm so big and so strong,
At a puff of my breath the great ships sail along.
Oh ho! oh ho! And who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and sail o'er the sea?

I swing all the weathercocks this way and that,
I play hare and hounds with a runaway hat;

But however I wander, I never can stray,
For go where I will, I've a free right of way!
Oh ho! oh ho! And who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

I skim o'er the heather, I dance up the street,
I've foes that I laugh at, and friends that I greet;
I'm known in the country, I'm named in the town,
For all the world over extends my renown.
Oh ho! oh ho! And who can I be,
That sweep o'er the land and scour o'er the sea?

—Henry Johnstone.

THE STARS IN THE SKY

Once on a time and twice on a time, and all times together as ever I heard tell of, there was a tiny lassie who would weep all day to have the stars in the sky to play with; she wouldn't have this, and she wouldn't have that, but it was always the stars she would have. So one fine day off she went to find them. And she walked and she walked and she walked, till by and by she came to a milldam.

"Good day to you," said she; "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any?"

"Oh, yes, my bonnie lassie," said the milldam. "They shine in my face nights till I can't sleep. Jump in, and perhaps you'll find one."

So she jumped in, and swam about and swam about and swam about, but not a one could she see. So she went on till she came to a brooklet.

"Good day to you, Brooklet, Brooklet," said

she; "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen any?"

"Yes, indeed, my bonnie lassie," said the

brooklet. "They glint on my banks at night. Paddle about, and maybe you'll find one."

So she paddled and she paddled and she paddled, but not a one did she find. So on she went till she came to the Good Folk.

"Good day to you, Good Folk," said she; "I'm looking for the stars in the sky to play with. Have you seen a single one?"

"Why, yes, my bonnie lassie," said the Good Folk. "They shine on the grass here at night. Dance with us, and maybe you'll find one."

And she danced and she danced and she danced, but not a one did she see. So down she sat; I suppose she wept.

"O dear me, O dear me," said she, "I've swum and I've paddled and I've danced, and if you'll not help me, I shall never find the stars in the sky to play with."

But the Good Folk whispered together, and one of them came up to her and took her by the hand and said: "If you won't go home to your mother, go forward, go forward; mind you take the right road. Ask Four Feet to carry you to No Feet at All, and tell No Feet at All to carry you to the stairs without steps, and if you can climb that—"

"Oh, shall I be among the stars in the sky then?" cried the lassie.

"If you'll not be, then you'll be elsewhere," said the Good Folk, and set to dancing again.

So on she went again with a light heart, and soon she came to a saddled horse, tied to a tree.

"Good day to you," said she; "I'm seeking the stars in the sky to play with. Will you give me a lift, for all my poor bones are aching?"

"Nay," said the horse; "I know naught of the stars in the sky, and I'm here to do the bidding of the Good Folk, and not my own will."

"Well," said she, "it's from the Good Folk I come, and they bade me tell Four Feet to carry me to No Feet at All."

"That's another story," said he; "jump up and ride with me."

So they rode and they rode and they rode, till they got out of the forest and found themselves

at the edge of the sea. And on the water in front of them was a wide glistening path running straight out towards a beautiful thing that rose out of the water and went up into the sky, and was all the colors in the world, blue and red and green, and wonderful to look at.

"Now get you down," said the horse; "I've brought you to the end of the land, and that's as much as Four Feet can do. I must away home to my own folk."

"But," said the lassie, "where's No Feet at All, and where are the stairs without steps? Please tell me that."

"I know not," said the horse; "it's none of my business, either. So good day to you, bonnie lassie;" and off he went.

So the lassie stood still and looked at the water, till a strange kind of fish came swimming up to her feet.

"Good day to you, big Fish," said she; "I'm

looking for the stars in the sky and for the stairs that climb up to them. Will you show me the way?"

"Nay," said the fish; "I can't, unless you bring me word from the Good Folk."

"Yes, indeed," said she. "They said Four Feet would bring me to No Feet at All, and No Feet at All would carry me to the stairs without steps."

"Ah, well," said the fish, "that's all right, then. Get on my back and hold fast."

And off he went — kerplash! — into the water, along the silver path, towards the bright arch. And the nearer they came, the brighter the sheen of it, till she had to shade her eyes from the light.

And as they came to the foot of it, she saw it was a broad, bright road, sloping up and away into the sky, and at the far, far end of it she could see wee shining things dancing about.

"Now," said the fish, "here you are, and

yonder's the stair; climb up, if you can, but hold on fast. I'll warrant you'll find the stair easier at home than by such a way; 'twas never meant for lassies' feet to travel;" and off he splashed through the water.

So she climbed and she climbed and she climbed, but not a step higher did she get; the light was before her and around her, and the water behind her, and the more she struggled, the more she was forced down into the dark and the cold, and the more she climbed, the deeper she fell.

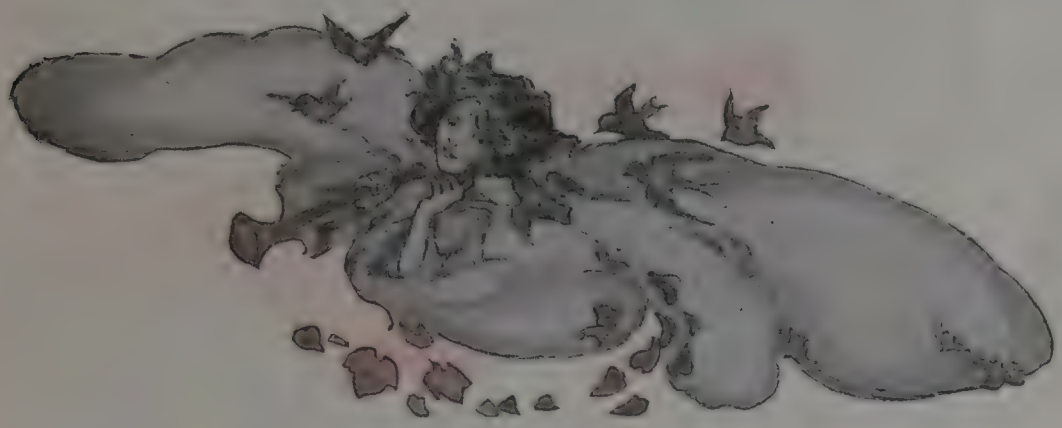
But she climbed and she climbed, till she got dizzy in the light and shivered with the cold, and dazed with the fear; but still she climbed, till at last, quite dazed and silly-like, she let quite go, and sank down — down — down.

And bang she came on to the hard boards, and found herself sitting, weeping and wailing, by the bedside at home all alone.

—Joseph Jacobs, *in "More English Fairy Tales," adapted*

ANSWER TO A CHILD'S QUESTION

Do you ask what the birds say? The sparrow,
the dove,
The linnet, and thrush say, "I love and I love!"
In the winter they're silent, the wind is so strong;
What it says I don't know, but it sings a loud song.



But green leaves and blossoms, and sunny warm
weather,
And singing and loving, all come back together;
Then the lark is so brimful of gladness and love,
The green fields below him, the blue sky above,
That he sings, and he sings, and forever sings he,
"I love my Love, and my Love loves me."

THE PEDDLER'S PACK

A peddler was toiling along a dusty road carrying his pack on his back, when he saw a donkey grazing by the wayside.

"Good day, friend," said he. "Perhaps you would

not mind carrying my load for me a little way."

"What will you give me?" said the donkey.

"I will give you two pieces of gold," said the peddler. But he really had no gold to give.

"Agreed," replied the donkey. So they journeyed on together, the donkey carrying the peddler's pack, and the peddler walking by his side.

After a time they met a raven, and the donkey called out to him: —

"Good morning, black friend. Come and sit on my back, and drive away the flies."

"What will you pay me?" asked the raven.

"I will give you three pieces of gold," said the donkey. But he, too, was making a false promise, for he had no gold at all to give.

"Agreed," said the raven. So they went on in high good humor, the donkey carrying the peddler's wares, and the raven sitting on the donkey's back driving away the flies.

After a time they met a sparrow, and the raven called out to it: "Good day, little cousin. Do you want to earn some money? If so, bring me some worms from the bank; for I have had no breakfast, and am very hungry."

"What will you pay me?" asked the sparrow.

"Let us say four pieces of gold," answered the raven, grandly. But he knew he could not do this, for he had no gold at all.

"Very well," said the sparrow; so on they went, the donkey carrying the peddler's pack, the raven keeping the flies away from the donkey, and the sparrow bringing worms to the raven.

Presently they saw in the distance a good-sized town. The peddler took out from his pack some shawls and stuffs, and hung them over the donkey's back that the passers-by might see the fine things, and perhaps buy some of them. On the top of the pack lay a small scarlet blanket.

When the sparrow saw the gay scarlet blanket he said to the peddler: "What will you take for that blanket? It looks like a good one. Name your price, and you shall have it; for I am badly in want of a blanket." But as the sparrow had not a penny he knew he could not pay for it.

"The price of the blanket is five pieces of gold," said the peddler.

"Too dear," said the sparrow. "I'll give you four pieces of gold for it, but five is too much."

"Agreed," said the peddler; and he chuckled to himself, "Now I shall be able to pay the donkey; otherwise I might have had some trouble in getting rid of him."

The sparrow flew to the raven's side, and whispered in his ear, "Please to pay me the four pieces of gold you owe me; for we are coming to a town, and I must be turning back."

"Four pieces of gold is really too much for bringing a few worms," said the raven, "but I will give you three, and you shall have them at once;" and he whispered in the donkey's ear:—

"Friend, it is time you paid me the three pieces of gold; the peddler will stop at this town."

"On thinking it over," said the donkey, "I have made up my mind that three pieces of gold

are a great deal too much to give for having a few flies driven away; I'll give you two."

Then the donkey turned to the peddler, "Now, good sir, your two pieces of gold, if you please."

"In a moment," replied the peddler, and, turning to the sparrow, said, "I really must have the money for the blanket at once."

"So you shall," answered the sparrow, and cried angrily to the raven, "I want my money now, and cannot wait!"

"In an instant," answered the raven, and again whispered to the donkey: "Why can't you pay me honestly? You should be ashamed!"

"I won't keep you waiting a second," said the donkey. "Come, peddler, give me my money. For shame! to cheat a poor beast like me!"

Then the peddler said to the sparrow, "Pay me for my blanket, or I'll wring your neck!"

And the sparrow cried to the raven, "Give me my money, or I'll peck out your eyes!"

And the raven croaked to the donkey, "If you don't pay me, I'll bite off your ears!"

And the donkey again cried to the peddler, "You dishonest wretch! pay me my money, or I'll kick you across the road!"

They made such an uproar that an officer came out of the town to see what it was all about. Each began to complain loudly of the other.

"You are a set of rogues and vagabonds!" said the officer. "Come with me!" So he led them to the mayor, who sat holding court.

"Whom have we here?" cried he. "A peddler, a donkey, a raven, and a sparrow, — worthless vagabonds! What have you to say?"

Then the peddler began to complain of the sparrow, the sparrow of the raven, the raven of the donkey, and the donkey of the peddler.

The mayor paid little attention to them; but he eyed the peddler's pack, and at last said: "You are good-for-nothing fellows! I order that

the peddler be thrown into prison; that the donkey be soundly beaten; that the raven and the sparrow have their tail feathers pulled out.

The blanket seems to be the only good thing here. I cannot let you keep the cause of such a disturbance, so I will take it for myself. Officer, lead the prisoners away."

THE ANT AND THE CRICKET

A silly young cricket, accustomed to sing
Through the warm, sunny months of gay summer
and spring,
Began to complain, when he found that at home
His cupboard was empty and winter was come.

Not a crumb to be found
On the snow-covered ground;
Not a flower could he see,
Not a leaf on a tree.

"Oh, what will become," said the cricket, "of me?"

At last by starvation and famine made bold,
All dripping with wet and all trembling with cold,
Away he set off to a miserly ant,
To see if, to keep him alive, he would grant

Him shelter from rain,
A mouthful of grain;
He wished only to borrow;
He'd repay it to-morrow:

If not, he must die of starvation and sorrow.

Said the ant to the cricket, "I'm your servant
and friend,
But we ants never borrow, we ants never lend;
But tell me, dear sir, did you lay nothing by
When the weather was warm?" Said the cricket,
"Not I.

My heart was so light
That I sang day and night,
For all nature looked gay."
"You sang, sir, you say?
Go then," said the ant, "and dance winter away."

Thus ending, he hastily lifted the wicket
And out of the door turned the poor little cricket.
Though this is a fable, the moral is good:
If you live without work, you must live without food.

In
The Days
of
Fairies

THE FAIRY WAND

Part I

Every fairy carries a little golden wand. It is this wand that gives her all her power. As long as she holds it in her hand, her every wish

will be granted. But let a fairy lose her wand, and she has no more power than other people. So, of course, fairies always take great care of their golden wands.

Once Little Fairy was playing in a meadow. She had hidden among the flowers; she had talked with the busy honeybees; she had watched the fish swimming in the brook. A yellow butterfly came flying by.

"What a beautiful butterfly!" cried Little Fairy. "I will catch him and take him back to Fairyland with me."

So off after the butterfly she went as fast as she could go. What a chase! Up hill and down, back and forth, followed Little Fairy wherever the butterfly led. More than once she reached her hand to take the butterfly as he stopped to sip honey from a flower; but before she could close her little fingers on a wing, away he would fly. At last there came a gust of wind and blew him quite out of sight.

"O dear! How tired I am!" sighed Little Fairy. "And I didn't catch the butterfly after all. Oh, I wish I were home in Fairyland!"

As Little Fairy made this wish, she closed her eyes for a moment. She thought she would find herself at home when she opened them. But to her surprise she was still in the meadow.

"My wand, my wand! I have lost my golden wand. O dear, what shall I do?" she cried.

In her fright she forgot that she was tired. She rushed about in great haste, searching everywhere for the lost wand. Where could it be? She crept through the tall grass; she peered under the leaves; she ran along the edge of the brook; she hunted over and over every step of the ground over which she had chased the butterfly. But no wand could she find.

Poor Little Fairy! Without her wand she could never return to her home in Fairyland. It was growing dark. Little Fairy was surely lost. She was so tired; she was hungry, too. She lay down close to a large tree trunk and there cried and sobbed herself to sleep.

Part II

All night and all the next day the fairy wand lay hidden in the long grass beside the road. At last the rays of the setting sun found it. Just then a little girl, returning that way from school, spied it glittering in the grass.

"What a beautiful wand!" she cried, as she picked it up. "I wonder where it came from. What a lucky girl I am!" And she hurried to show her treasure to her mother.

Soon the little girl came upon a poor old man

sitting on a stone by the roadside. He looked tired and ill.

"What is the matter?" asked the little girl. "Are you ill? Can I do anything to help you?"

"Yes, I am ill, and I am tired and hungry, too," answered the old man. "I am very poor. We have no food in the house, for I have been too ill to work. This morning I walked to town to try to get work. But no one would give me anything to do, and now I am on my way home. Ah, me! I am so tired, so tired!"

"Poor man," said the little girl, kindly; "what can I do! Oh, I wish I had a purse that would never be empty!"

As she said this, the little girl felt something drop into her book bag. She looked, and there was a purse full of money! How surprised she was! Of course, we are not surprised, for we know that she held the fairy wand in her hand when she made the wish.

She filled her book bag with money and gave it to the old man. Still the purse was full.

"If I only had a stick to put through the handles, I could carry it better," said the old man, as he raised the bag to his shoulder. "Here, here is something better than a stick," said the little girl, handing him her fairy wand.

"Oh, thank you and bless you, my dear child. I wish that you may always be kind and happy as you are to-day, and that every one may love you."

As the fairy wand was in the old man's hand when he said this, his wish came true. As long as this girl lived, even when she became an old, old lady, she was kind and happy; every one loved her.

Part III

The little girl said good-by and ran home with her wonderful purse. The old man started on his way, too. But he did not run. Old and tired as he was, the bag of money was almost too heavy for him.

"My wife and I will now have enough to eat and to wear. But it is so sad to be old," sighed the weary man. "I wish I were young and strong again."

As he said this, he straightened up, a young man again. He was no longer tired; he was no longer ill. The bag of money hung lightly over his shoulder. How strong he felt! How happy he was! He broke into a gay song.

It took the now strong young man but a short time to reach his little home. As he came in singing, his old wife heard and came slowly to meet him, for she was as old and as feeble as he had been when he left the house in the morning.

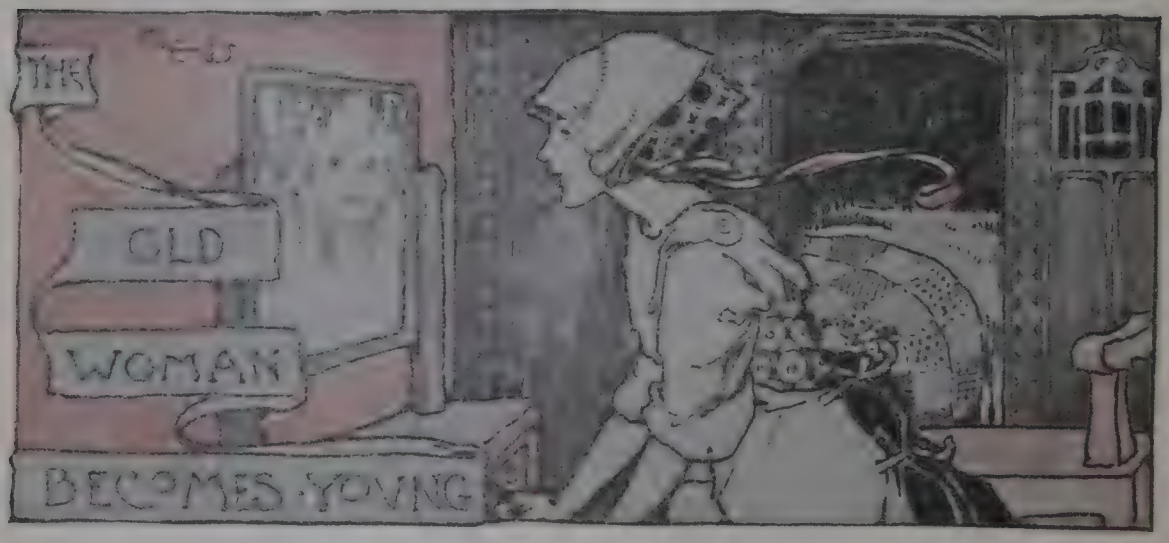
"See, wife," he cried, "see all the money I have! And see how young and strong I am! I will get work, and we shall no longer be poor."

"My husband? Are you my husband?" The poor woman could hardly believe her eyes.

The man found work, as he had said, and he soon had plenty. Indeed, he became quite rich.

But his wife could not be happy. True, she had plenty to eat and plenty to wear; but she was still old, and lame, and weak.

One day this poor woman was dusting a high shelf, when she came upon the fairy wand.



The wife picked up the golden wand and brushed off the thick dust. It shone as brightly as ever. Then the woman recalled how it came there, and she felt more unhappy than ever. Why could not she be young again, like her husband?

"O dear," she cried aloud, "I wish I were young again, too!"

As she spoke, her pale cheeks became rosy, her white hair became black, her bent back became straight, her weak limbs became strong. She walked, she danced, she ran, she sang. She was a young woman once more.

Now both husband and wife, once so old and feeble, were young and happy again. They became very rich. They built a beautiful house, and trouble never again came to them in all their long lives.

Part IV

As we have already learned, the old man whom the wand made young again became very rich. His house was filled with beautiful and costly things. There were many things of gold and of silver; there were diamonds and other precious stones.

Two bold robbers heard of the man's riches. They set their wicked hearts on getting some of

them away from him. So one dark night they crept softly into the rich man's house. Quickly they gathered together all the precious things they could find — gold and silver spoons, plates, knives, forks, bowls, rings, and other jewels. They tied all these things up into a large bundle nearly as heavy as one of them could carry.

Just as the robbers were stealing out of the house, one of them spied the golden wand shining faintly in the pale moonlight.

"Ho, brother, this is worth taking along," whispered the robber, picking up the wand.

The robbers were soon well away from the house and hurrying through the forest. The bundle was getting heavy.

"Here," said the first robber, "it is your turn to take this now."

As the second robber took the bundle, he tripped over a stone in the darkness, and fell headlong on the ground. The precious bundle burst

open, and the stolen things were scattered all about.

The robbers groped about on their hands and knees trying to regain their treasure. But it was

slow work, and sharp thorns pricked their hands, tore their clothes, and scratched their faces.

"Oh, bother! I wish these things were all back where they came from," at last cried the robber who still held fast to the fairy wand.

Of course, we know what happened then. In a twinkling everything was back in its place in

the rich man's house — everything but the wand; the robber clung tightly to that.

But in the darkness the robbers had seen nothing disappear. So they went on searching. They soon began to get angry and to scold. Each blamed the other for his bad luck.

"Sh! What's that? I hear some one coming," whispered one robber.

"That's nothing. Get to work!" answered the other, in a loud and angry voice.

"Do be still. It might be a policeman."

"I wish it were a policeman, and that he would take you off to prison where you belong."

These words were barely out of the robber's mouth when a big policeman stood before them. He seized them and marched them off to prison.

The robbers were no richer for their night's work, the rich man was no poorer. The robber who spoke last still carried the golden wand; but he knew not its power.

Part V

The policeman soon brought the robbers safely to prison. Before they were locked in their cells, they were searched. Among other things taken from them was the wonderful wand. This was left on a desk in the office.

Now, in this prison there was a poor man who had done nothing wrong. But because he had no money to pay his rent, he was sent to prison.

The poor man had left a little lame boy at home, a cripple, whom he loved dearly. The father longed and longed to go home to his child.

Every morning this man had to dust the prison office. This was one of his duties. He was trusted to do this because the jailer knew he was honest.

The morning after the robbers were brought to the prison, the poor man was dusting the office as usual.

"What a pretty stick!" he exclaimed, as he

picked up the fairy wand from the desk. "How pleased my little lame Will would be with that! Oh, I wish I were home with him this minute!"

At once the father stood in his own home before his dear boy. How delighted they were to be together again! And how surprised they were, too!

"Why, father, how did you come here? Is the rent paid?" asked Will, eagerly.

"No, child, the rent is not paid," said the father, sadly. "I only wish I had the money to pay it!"

So saying, he put his hand in his pocket, that he thought was empty, and drew out a handful of bright gold coins. This did not surprise either of them much, for they had not yet recovered from their first great surprise at seeing each other. Anyway, there was the money. The rent could be paid, and the father need not leave his boy again.

"Oh, father, where did you get that pretty gold rod?" asked Will. "Will you give it to me?"

The father had forgotten all about the wand, which he still held in his hand.

"Of course you may have it, my boy," he said. "I am glad if this little thing pleases you. Never mind, after I pay the rent I'll find work, and we shall soon have plenty of money. Then I'll buy you ever so many pretty playthings."

The father went off to pay the rent and to search for work, while the little crippled boy dragged himself off to the meadow near by, which was his usual playground. Here he liked to lie under the oak trees. This morning he was more tired than usual, and he soon fell asleep, holding the golden wand fast in his pale little hand.

Now this meadow was the very one in which the fairy had lost her wand. Here the poor thing had lived, vainly seeking her precious wand, ever since her unlucky chase after the butterfly.

The little cripple had been sleeping only a few minutes when the busy fairy saw him. At the same moment she spied her long-lost wand.

THE · FAIRY · FINDS · HER WAND ·

"Oh, my wand, my wand!" cried the fairy.

The little lame boy awoke at the fairy's cry. He opened his blue eyes very wide at sight of the queer little thing standing before him. He had never seen a fairy before, and, of course, he did not know that he was holding in his hand a fairy's wand.

"Please give me my wand, little boy. I lost it a long time ago and have been hunting for it ever since. I am so glad that I have found it at last. Please give it to me," said the little fairy, in the sweetest voice the little cripple had ever heard.

"Of course I will give it to you if it is yours," said Will, handing it to her. "I thought it was mine. My father gave it to me this morning."

Such a happy fairy was never seen before. Once more she had her precious wand. Now she could do and have anything she wished. Best of all, she could return to her dear home in Fairy-land. But she was a good fairy, thoughtful of others. So in her great joy she did not forget the poor little cripple before her.

"You have been so good, little boy, to return my wand. I cannot thank you enough. But I will do more than thank you. You shall have anything you wish."

It took the little lame boy but a moment to

make a wish. The fairy at once granted it, and said, "When you go home, you will find a surprise awaiting you." Then she flew away with her golden wand back to her home in Fairyland.

The little boy watched her till she was out of sight. Then he jumped up and ran to the house. His crutches were left on the ground, under the tree. He never needed them again.

When he reached his house he hardly knew it. It was larger and really very pretty. Beautiful flowers grew in the garden. Vines covered the porch. Inside it was newly furnished. The cupboards were filled with food. A purse of gold lay on the table.

Just think how surprised the father was when he returned at night! He and his little son were no longer poor. They were rich and oh, so happy! And they lived happy ever after. I wish I could find a fairy wand. Don't you?

WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river,
Golden is the sand.
It flows along forever
With trees on either hand.

Green leaves a-floating,
Castles of the foam,
Boats of mine a-boating—
Where will all come home?

On goes the river
  And out past the mill,
Away down the valley,
  Away down the hill.

Away down the river,
  A hundred miles or more,
Other little children
  Shall bring my boats ashore.

—Robert Louis Stevenson.

LUCK AND WEALTH

Once upon a time there was a man who was as poor as a church mouse. Every day he bound a bundle of brooms, which he carried to the city. And so from day to day he made a living as best he could for himself and his wife.

Close to the city Luck and Wealth were wandering about one day. They fell to disputing as to which of them was the more powerful, which

could do the more good. Right in the midst of their dispute the poor man came up with a bundle of brooms.

Thereupon Wealth said to Luck: "We will test this matter. Here comes a poor broom binder. I have only to wish it, and he will carry no more brooms to market, as you will see."

"Good!" said Luck; "when you are through I will try. And he shall be declared the more powerful who makes the poor man the richer. You will see that I shall win, because after your trial the poor man will bind brooms again, but after mine he will send a six-ox load of wheat to the city, while he rides proudly behind the wagon on his horse."

Wealth now stepped up to the poor man and said: "My poor fellow, you have carried brooms long enough. I pity your wretched life, so here are a hundred gold pieces for you. But don't let me ever again see you carrying brooms!"

The poor man gave many and hearty thanks for the gift, hastened to get rid of his brooms, and then set out on his homeward journey, full of joy over his large sum of money. When he reached home his wife was not there. As he had no good place in which to lock up his gold, he hid it in the bran pot. Then he ran out into

the forest to fetch wood, so that his wife could heat some water.

Meantime the wife returned. But as she had nothing out of which she could make food, she measured out the bran quickly, ran to a neighboring grocer, and exchanged the bran for corn meal. When her husband came home the broth was all ready. After he had eaten of this heartily, he went to the bran pot to take out his hundred clinking gold pieces. But there was neither bran nor gold!

"Why, wife, where is the bran?"

"I exchanged it at the grocer's for corn meal."

"But what did you do with the hundred gold pieces then?"

"As if you ever had a hundred gold pieces, — you or your whole tribe!" cried the wife.

Thereupon the two became angry and began to quarrel. The man hurried the woman off to the grocer's, where they demanded the gold pieces.

"Are you mad?" cried the grocer. "You emptied the bran yourself into the bin."

What was to be done? Empty-handed and sad, they slunk off home, and the poor man went to work binding brooms again.

The next day he set out for the city with a bundle of brooms. Luck spied him while he was still far off, and called out merrily to Wealth: —

"Look, Wealth, look there! There comes the poor man with his bundle of brooms!"

Wealth was very angry. He hastened to meet the poor man.

"How dare you carry brooms?" he cried. The poor man then told what ill luck he had had with the hundred gold pieces.

"Well," said Wealth, "I'll give you another hundred. But don't you ever again let me see you carrying brooms."

The poor man hastened home in great joy. But this time, again, his wife was not there. He

quickly hid the money in the ash pot. Then he went out into the forest after wood. Meanwhile his wife returned from her journey to the village. There was not a grain of meal in the house. So she took the ash pot and ran with it to the tanner's where she exchanged it for corn meal.

When the man had made a good meal on corn broth, he thought he would fetch the money, so that his wife too might see a great sum once in her life. But no ashes, no money, not a trace of them could be seen or heard!

"Hullo, wife, where are the ashes?" called the man, in sudden fear and rage.

"Where?" stammered the wife, all in a tremble. "You have eaten them!"

"And the hundred gold pieces?"

But of these the poor woman had really seen no trace.

Again these two quarreled all the way as they rushed off to the tanner's, of whom they de-

manded back the hundred gold pieces. But the tanner seized a big knife, and chased the poor man and his wife out of his house into the street.

What could be done? The poor man got his string, went out into the forest, bound a bundle of brooms, and set out with them that very day for the city. Luck recognized him while he was still in the distance. And this time he called out to Wealth more merrily than before: —

"Just see there, Wealth! Here comes that poor man, and he is carrying brooms! Ha! ha!"

"I'll give the fellow nothing more," said Wealth, in disgust, "for I see that he lacks sense. Now you do with him what you will."

As the poor man came up, Luck addressed him: "Here, poor man, here is a penny, for I see that you have to struggle hard for your daily bread."

The poor man gave hearty thanks, then went on his way into the city. There he sold his brooms, and with the price bought meal, salt, and eggs. But with the penny he bought three nuts, and then set out for home.

On his way he came upon three children. They were quarreling over something, and almost scratching one another's eyes out.

"What are you quarreling about, my children?" asked the poor man.

"Just see this shiny thing, Mister," one

replied. "We found it together, and now we can't divide it."

The shiny thing was really a diamond. But this neither the children nor the poor man knew.

"Don't quarrel," said the poor man; "give it to me, and I will give each of you a nut for it."

The children agreed to this gladly, and the poor man carried the treasure home and laid it on the mantel.

Evening came. Of a sudden it became as bright in the house as though a pound of candles had been lighted all at once! The poor man was rejoicing at the thought that he could now bind brooms at night without burning candles, and so earn more, when he heard a wagon stop before his house. A traveling merchant appeared at the door and asked to light his pipe.

"For," said the merchant, "I have seen no other house so brightly lighted as yours."

The merchant recognized the glittering dia-

mond at sight. Whereupon he asked the poor man for how much he would sell it.

"That is just the kind of light I need in my travels," said he.

"Ah, my dear sir, that is a very precious thing," answered the poor man.

"I'll give you a bushel of silver dollars for it."

"Ah, sir, that is a very precious thing," insisted the man.

"Well, then, I will give you two bushels."

"Not less than three bushels, sir; it is worth at least that much between brothers even."

They agreed. The merchant knew what he was buying, so he went quickly to his wagon and measured out three bushels of silver dollars. The poor man rejoiced over his bargain, for he did not know what he had sold. He thought so much money would do for candles and for something besides.

The next day he bought a farm, a field, and a

meadow. And in the autumn he was quite overjoyed at the great piles of wheat which he harvested. He bought six fine oxen, two horses for his carriage, and a saddle horse. Then on St. Martin's day he loaded his wagon with wheat, so much that six more oxen had to be hitched on to pull it up the hills. Now off he sent this load to the city, while he rode proudly behind on his saddle horse.

Luck and Wealth were standing near the market place when he came up. Thereupon Luck asked Wealth: —

"Do you recognize that fine gentleman, Wealth?"

"I do not," answered Wealth. "I cannot recall him."

"But you should know him," said Luck, "for he is the former broom binder. Now see how with one penny I have made him a rich man."

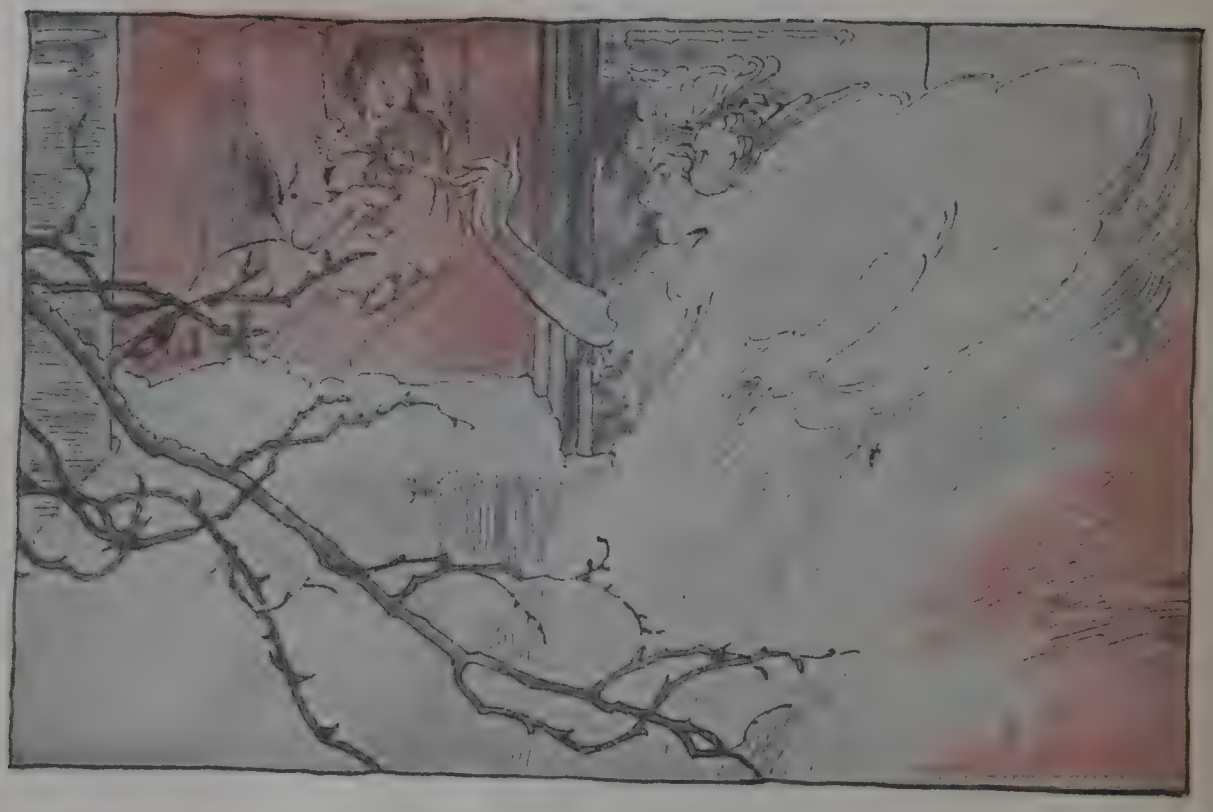
— *A Hungarian Tale*

WINTER NIGHTS

Blow, wind, blow!
Drift the flying snow!
Send it twirling, whirling overhead!
There's a bedroom in a tree,
Where, snug as snug can be,
The squirrel nests in his cozy bed.

Shriek, wind, shriek!
Make the branches creak!
Battle with the boughs till break o' day!
In a snow cave warm and tight,
Through the icy winter night,
The rabbit sleeps the peaceful hours away.

Call, wind, call,
In entry and in hall,
Straight from off the mountain white and wild!
Soft purs the pussy cat
On her little fluffy mat,
And beside her nestles close her furry child.

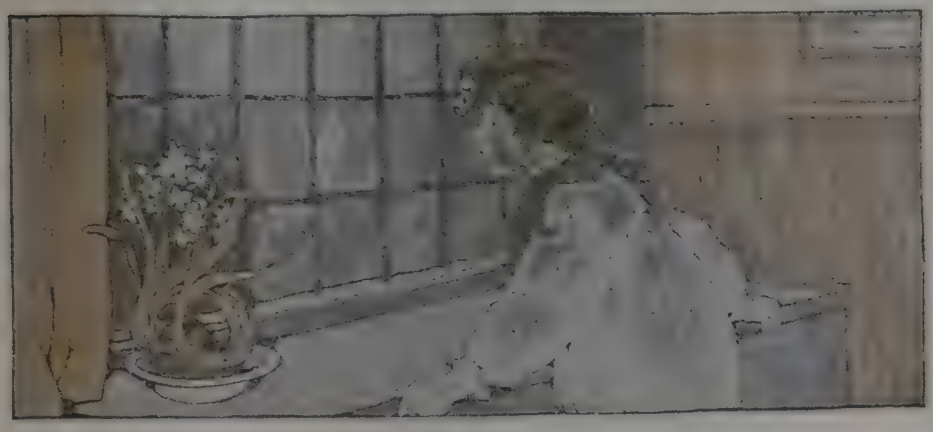


Scold, wind, scold,
So bitter and so bold!
Shake the windows with your tap, tap, tap!
With half-shut, dreamy eyes
The drowsy baby lies,
Cuddled closely in his mother's lap.

—Mary F. Butts.

WINDY NIGHTS

Whenever the moon and stars are set,
  Whenever the wind is high,
All night long, in the dark and wet,
  A man goes riding by.
Late at night, when the fires are out,
Why does he gallop and gallop about?



Whenever the trees are crying aloud,
  And ships are tossed at sea,
By, on the highway, low and loud,
  By at the gallop goes he.
By at the gallop he goes, and then
By he comes back at the gallop again.

UP AND DOWN

The sun is gone down,
  And the moon's in the sky;
But the sun will come up,
  And the moon be laid by.

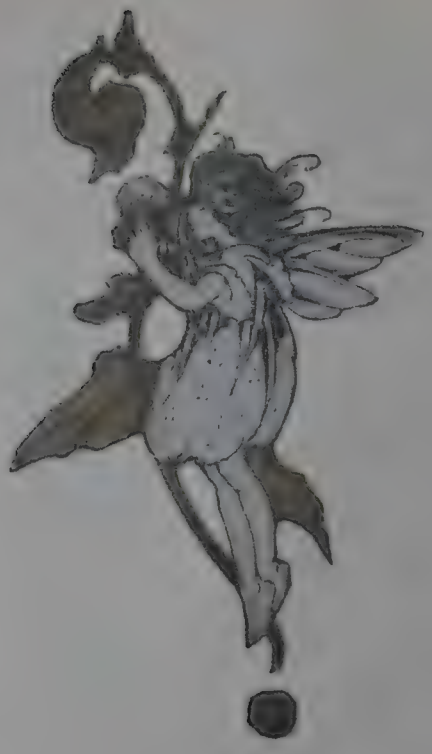
The flower is asleep,
  But it is not dead;
When the morning shines,
  It will lift its head.

When the winter comes
  It will die — no, no;
It will only hide
  From the frost and snow.

Sure is the summer,
  Sure is the sun;
The night and the winter
  Are shadows that run.

— George Macdonald.

Home
Stories



THE GOLDEN CUPS

Part I

Once upon a time, many years ago, there lived a boy named Carl. He was very poor. His

home, which was beside a great forest, was only a hut.

But this poor boy was very happy. The great forest was his playground. The birds, and squirrels, and pretty flowers were his friends. He knew where they lived, and he liked to watch them. He was kind to them all. He never threw stones at the birds or squirrels, and he never crushed the beautiful flowers.

One day while he was playing in the forest, Carl became thirsty. "I'll go to the spring," he said, "to the Fairy Well. No other water is so sweet; no other water is so cool."

So away he hurried to the Fairy Well. He dipped his old tin cup into the clear water. Just as he was raising it brimming full to his lips, he heard, "Carl, Carl!"

Carl looked up quickly. On the other side of the spring he saw an old, old woman standing. She was bent nearly double, and leaned heavily on a thick stick.

"What can I do for you?" asked Carl kindly.

"Give me a drink, please," said the old woman. "I am tired. I have walked far."

"You are very welcome to a drink," said Carl, as he handed her his cup of water. "I am sorry I have not a better cup to offer you. But the water is cool and sweet."

"Thank you, Carl," said the old woman, taking the cup. She drank the water to the last drop.

"What a pretty cup you have," she said, handing it back to Carl.

Carl stretched out his hand for the cup. How heavy it was! He looked and saw, not his old tin cup, but a cup of shining gold.

"But this is not my cup," he cried, as soon as he could speak. "My cup was of tin, old and rusty. This cup is of gold, bright, new and shining."

How beautiful it was! How smooth it felt! How the poor boy longed to keep it! But no, it was not his. He must give it back.

"Here," he said at last sadly, "here, take back this golden cup. Give me my old rusty tin one."

Carl reached out the golden cup slowly, so slowly, toward the old woman. Never before had the lad seen anything half so beautiful. At last he could reach no farther. Still the cup was in his hand. Why did not the old woman take it?

He raised his eyes. The old woman had gone. In her place stood a lovely fairy. How beautiful she looked, more beautiful even than the golden cup! Her dress was soft and green. Her wings were like the wings of a bright butterfly.

"Dear Carl," said the fairy sweetly, "the golden cup is yours. I give it to you because you were so kind to me when I looked like a poor old woman. Keep it safely and always be kind. Every year, on this day, come to this spring. You will always find a golden cup waiting for you. But, Carl, don't forget to be kind."

With these words the fairy flew away.

Part II

Year after year came and went until Carl became a man. And every year, always on the same day, he visited the Fairy Well. And there every year the little fairy put in his hand a golden cup.

These cups Carl hoarded carefully, so carefully. Every year added one more to his store. But still he had none to spare. He had none to share with any poor child. He always wanted more and more.

He was fast forgetting his little friends of the forest. He was thinking more and more of his cups. As soon as he got a new cup in his hand he began to look forward to the day when he could get another. He wished the years to pass more quickly.

And the years did pass. Fast and faster they flew by. At last Carl was an old man, bent and feeble.

He thought of nothing now but his golden cups. From morning till night he was busy with them. He would look at them by the hour. He would count them over and over. He would lie awake nights thinking of them. When he slept, he dreamed of them. Often he would get up from his bed to make sure they were all safe. He never went out now except on the one day in the year when he went to the Fairy Well to get another cup. On that day he always hurried to the well as fast as he could go. He never stopped to speak to any one. He never looked at the beautiful flowers; he never heard the songs of the birds. He had quite forgotten the little friends whom he once loved so dearly.

He would snatch the new cup from the fairy's hand and hasten away home. He never stopped long enough to say even "Thank you." He was so afraid some one would go to his house and steal his cups while he was away.

The fear of losing his cups grew stronger and stronger year by year. At last there came a year when he could scarcely take his eyes off them for a moment. He sat up late into the night watching them. He got up long before light to guard

them. When the day came to go to the Fairy Well he did not dare to leave his cups. Nor could he bear to let the day go by without adding one more precious cup to his store. What should he do? It was now almost night. He had spent

the whole day in fear, starting as far as his door and then turning suddenly back to his cups. At last he thought of a plan. He gathered all his cups carefully but quickly into a large bag. This he threw over his bent back, which bent now lower than ever. Then he staggered along as fast as he could with his heavy load toward the well. He would yet reach it before nightfall. And he would not only get another cup, but he would ask the good fairy to tell him where he might hide all his cups in a safe place, in a place where no one could steal them.

When he reached the Well, there stood the little fairy waiting patiently. She held in her hand a bright new cup, just as she had done on this day for many, many years. Carl seized it eagerly in his trembling hands; he clutched it tightly.

The fairy turned away, no longer expecting any word from the old man.

"Stop, stop, kind fairy, one moment," cried Carl, in a trembling voice. "Will you not tell me where I can hide my golden cups safely? I am so afraid some one will steal them."

"Yes, indeed," answered the fairy. "I know the best place in the world for those cups. Come with me and I will show you where to put them."

Carl followed the little fairy gladly as she led the way into the green meadow. And when she showed him holes in the soft turf and told him to put his cups into them, he did so, for he trusted the little fairy who had always been kind. Then he covered over the cups carefully with soft earth and leaves. When that was done he looked around for the fairy, but she was nowhere to be seen. So he started away homeward, still thinking of his cups. But now he felt sure they were safe, and he began really to feel happy once more.

Part III

Next morning he was up with the sun and hastening toward the meadow. He would make sure that his treasures were still safe. He began to dig eagerly in the grass where he knew he had buried some cups. But not a cup could he find! He hurried from spot to spot, digging little holes all around. But no cups were to be found, — only dirt, and leaves, and grass roots.

As he rose from his digging, he saw an old, old woman standing near and watching him. She was bent like himself; and she leaned heavily on a thick stick.

"Why do you dig those holes?" she asked.

"I, I —" and the old man could say no more. He stood staring at the old woman. Then everything seemed to him to turn back years and years. He was a little ragged, thirsty boy again, standing by the Fairy Well. And the old woman was the same one who had asked for a drink

from his tin cup. As he looked at her she melted away before his eyes, and in her place stood the beautiful little fairy holding a tiny golden cup toward him.

"I give you this golden cup, dear Carl," the fairy was saying in her sweet voice, "because you were kind to me. Keep it, and never forget to be kind. Never forget to be kind."

"Oh, good fairy, how glad I am to see you," cried the old man, reaching out for the cup which she held in her hand. "You will show me where to find all the golden cups which you helped me to bury here last night. I have dug and dug, but not one can I find."

"Indeed, you need not dig for them. Look in your hand; then look all around the fields," said the fairy, and she waved her hand toward the meadow.

Carl looked and saw that he was holding in his hand a lovely golden-yellow flower. It was

shaped like his precious golden cups. Then he looked at the fields and saw the same golden blossoms on all sides. Happy, laughing children were gathering great handfuls of them.

"Those are your golden cups," said the fairy. "They were meant to make people happy. They were meant to be shared. But you hoarded them; and you became very unhappy. See, now, how glad they make those little children." With these words the fairy was gone.

The old man stood a long time in the meadow, watching the happy children at play. How merry their chatter and laughter sounded to him! Some little girls brought him great handfuls of the new yellow flowers. How sweet they looked! At last he turned homeward through the quiet forest. How cool it was under the shade of the great maples, and birch, and chestnuts! How sweetly the birds were singing all around! How merrily the squirrels chattered as they ran and leaped

among the branches! All the friends of his boyhood had come back to the old man again.

When he reached his home, Carl was tired and lay down to rest. And resting, he fell quietly asleep with all the sweet sounds in his ears which he had not heard before for many years. He slept on and on without waking.

All these things happened many years ago, no one knows how many. But the beautiful yellow cup-shaped flowers still grow in the meadows. The happy children still gather them every year. They call them Buttercups.

THE VOICE OF THE GRASS

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
By the dusty roadside,
On the sunny hillside,
Close by the noisy brook,
In every shady nook,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, smiling everywhere;
All around the open door,
Where sit the aged poor;
Here where the children play,
In the bright and merry May,
I come creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
In the noisy city street
My pleasant face you'll meet,
Cheering the sick at heart
Toiling his busy part, —
Silently creeping, creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
You cannot see me coming,
Nor hear my low sweet humming;
For in the starry night
And the glad morning light,
I come quietly creeping everywhere.

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
More welcome than the flowers
In summer's pleasant hours;
The gentle cow is glad,
And the merry bird not sad,
To see me creeping, creeping everywhere.

* * * * * * * *

Here I come creeping, creeping everywhere;
My humble song of praise
Most joyfully I raise
To him at whose command
I beautify the land,
Creeping, silently creeping everywhere.

THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE

Under a toadstool
Crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain,
To shelter himself.

Under the toadstool,
Sound asleep,

Sat a big Dormouse
All in a heap.

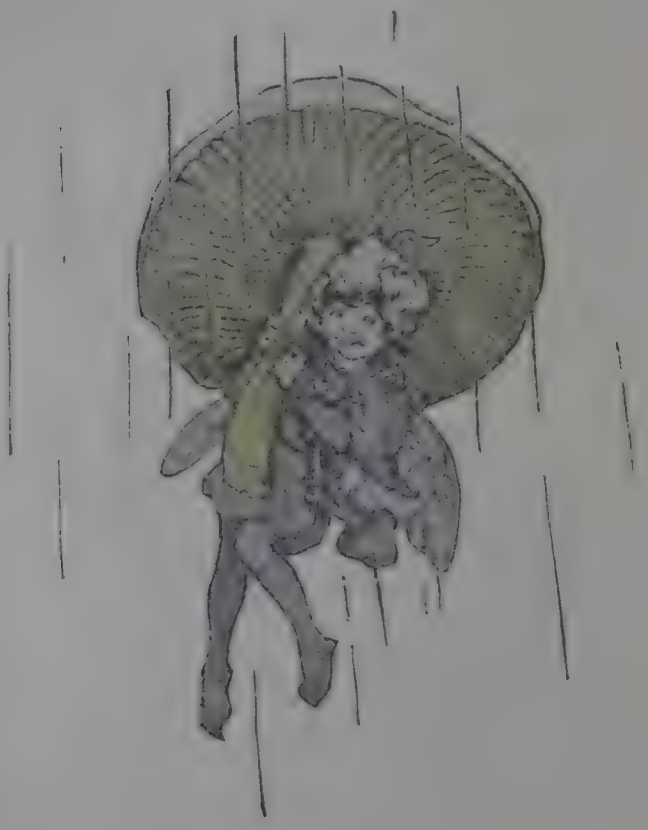
Trembled the wee Elf,
Frightened, and yet
Fearing to fly away
Lest he get wet.

To the next shelter—
Maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf
Smiled a wee smile,

Tugged till the toadstool
Toppled in two.
Holding it over him,
Gayly he flew.

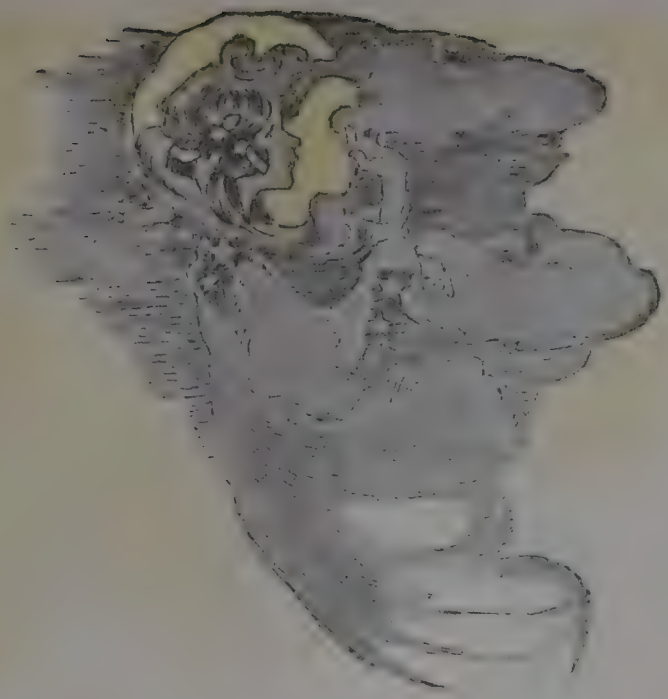
Soon he was safe home,
Dry as could be.

Soon woke the Dormouse—
"Good gracious me!



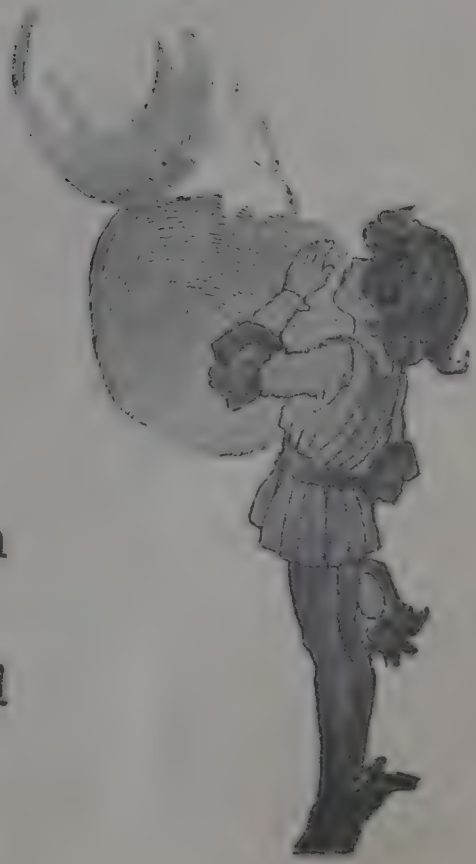
"Where is my toadstool?"
Loud he lamented.
—And that's how umbrellas
First were invented.

—Oliver Herford.



WIND AND MOON

Said the Wind to the Moon,
"I will blow you out.
You stare
In the air
Like a ghost in a chair,
Always looking what I am
about;
I hate to be watched; I will
blow you out."



The Wind blew hard, and out went the Moon.
So, deep,
On a heap
Of clouds, to sleep,
Down lay the Wind, and slumbered soon —
Muttering low, "I've done for that Moon."

He turned in his bed; she was there again!
On high
In the sky,
With her one ghost eye,
The Moon shone white and alive and plain.
Said the Wind, "I will blow you out again."

The Wind blew hard, and the Moon grew dim.
"With my sledge
And my wedge
I have knocked off her edge!
If only I blow right fierce and grim,
The creature will soon be dimmer than dim."

He blew and blew, and she thinned to a thread.
"One puff
More's enough
To blow her to snuff!
One good puff more where the last was bred,
And glimmer, glimmer, glum will go the thread!"

He blew a great blast and the thread was gone;
In the air
Nowhere
Was a moonbeam bare;
Far off and harmless the shy stars shone;
Sure and certain the Moon was gone!

The Wind he took to his revels once more;
On down
In town,
Like a merry mad clown,
He leaped and hallooed with whistle and roar.
"What's that?" The glimmering thread once more!

He flew in a rage — he danced and blew;
But in vain
Was the pain
Of his bursting brain;
For still the broader the Moon scrap grew,
The broader he swelled his big cheeks and blew.

Slowly she grew — till she filled the night,
And shone
On her throne
In the sky alone,
A matchless, wonderful, silvery light,
Radiant and lovely, the Queen of the Night.

Said the Wind — "What a marvel of power
am I!
With my breath,
Good faith!
I blew her to death —
First blew her away right out of the sky —
Then blew her in; what a strength am I!"

But the Moon she knew nothing about the affair,
For, high
In the sky,
With her one white eye,
Motionless, miles above the air,
She had never heard the great Wind blare.

—George Macdonald.

HOW THE ROBIN GOT HIS RED BREAST

On the edge of a great forest lived an Indian. All alone he dwelt there in his wigwam. But he was not lonely. All the birds and the beasts of the forest were his friends. He never harmed any of them. He loved them all. He was known far and wide as the "Friend of the Animals."

The squirrels came to the door of his wigwam and chattered and scolded till he came out with some nuts for them. Then they sat erect and ate from his hand. The timid rabbits knew him

for their friend and cropped the grass at his feet. And one winter, when it was very cold in the forest, two dainty, soft-eyed deer came to this good man's wigwam as if asking for food. All winter they stayed near him and he fed and tamed them. But his best loved friends were the little brown birds that built their nests in the branches of the large oak tree over his wigwam. They would fly to him and perch on his head and shoulders whenever he walked in the forest. Every morning they flew to the lodge pole of his tent and sang their morning song, and the last thing they did in the evening was to sing "good night" to their friend.

On the other side of this forest lived some wicked Indians. They were not kind to the birds and animals. They hunted and killed them. So all the animals feared these Indians and ran or flew from them whenever they came near.

These wicked Indians had heard of the good

Indian, the "Friend of the Animals." They hated him because he was kind. They planned to kill him.

One day the kind Indian was standing before his wigwam looking up at his dear little birds and listening to their sweet songs. As he stood there, a band of wicked Indians came stealing through the forest.

They glided softly from tree to tree, hiding behind the trunks until they formed a circle around him. Then they crept in nearer and nearer to the good Indian. When they were quite near, they rushed forward with wild whoops and sprang upon him. Quickly they bound his hands and marched him off through the forest to their village.

At the wild whoops of the wicked Indians the little birds flew away in fright. But when they saw their kind friend hurried off with bound hands, their courage came back.

"We must do something to help our dear friend," they said. "Come, let us follow." And they flew along high over the tree tops, calling down cheerfully to their friend below, "Cheer up, cheer up! We will try to save you."

When the Indians came to their village, they led their captive to a stout post set under a large tree. To this post they bound him fast. While they were doing this, the little brown birds hid themselves among the branches of the tree.

The Indian squaws and children hurried to the forest and came back bringing bundles of dry leaves and sticks. These they piled high around the feet of the good Indian. Then a tiny spark was brought quickly from the camp fire, and dropped among the dry leaves. But before they could take fire a little brown bird dropped quickly from the tree top. He seized the spark in his beak and flew off with it. As he flew, the feathers of his breast caught fire and blazed up bright red.

But, strange to say, the little bird was not burned!

Then another Indian brought a second spark from the camp fire and tried to set fire to the dried leaves and sticks piled around the feet of

the good Indian, and a second little bird flew down and carried it away, and his breast also became bright red.

Again and again the Indians dropped a spark among the leaves. But each time a little brown bird from the tree top snatched the spark away. And each time a little breast blazed up bright red.

At last the Indians became frightened. "Why is this so?" they asked in hushed voices.

"The Great Manitou loves this Indian," said their old chief. "He it is who sends the birds to carry off our fire. If we hurt him, Manitou will send his fire from heaven upon us. His fire — the lightning — will burn our wigwams and kill our people. Untie the captive, and let him go!"

The frightened Indians cut the cords of deerskin, and the "Friend of the Animals" was free.

Gladly he went back through the forest to his wigwam. But he was not happier than the little birds who returned with him. Every one of them bore the mark of his love for him, — a red breast. And ever since then people have called these birds Robin Redbreasts.

THE SPRITE OF THE MILL

Part I

Years ago there lived in Holland a man named Jan Van Vedder. The little children, passing him on the street, would point at him and whisper, "There goes Jan Van Vedder. He is the richest man in the world."

Now, while this was not true, it was true that Jan was the richest man in the country round. He had the largest farm, the greenest pastures, the sleekest cattle in the land. Very proud was Jan of all his riches, but his great windmill — the largest in Holland — was the very joy of his heart. He loved to stand and look up at the great sails flapping in the wind.

"Work on, old friend," he would call; "you can grind more corn in a day than any other mill can grind in a week."

Jan Van Vedder was not only proud, he was

selfish. He was never known to do a kind act in his life. The winter of the great frost, Hans Bruckner, a poor dike mender, lost his life in a terrific storm. One day a poor farmer called on Jan.

"We are doing all we can to help Hans' widow and children," he said. "They are living in a little cottage that belongs to you. Will you let them live there until spring without paying rent?"

"What!" cried Jan. "Let beggars stay in my house? Never! They pay or they go."

And he would have turned them out into the cold and snow, but the poor people each gave a little money and so paid the rent.

Jan Van Vedder was standing one autumn morning at the door of his great gristmill, smoking his long pipe. Never had he felt happier, prouder, more pleased with himself and all his riches. He stood gazing on his broad fields of waving grain just ready for the sickle, and on his immense herds of cattle grazing in the meadows.

As Jan stood thus calmly puffing his fragrant tobacco, an old man approached him. He walked very slowly, leaning heavily on a stout stick. This was "Old Jacob," the oldest man in the village; many and marvelous were the stories he could tell of the old days.

"Good morning, Jan," he said. "How well your grain looks this year."

"Yes," answered the miller, "I was just thinking I would begin harvesting it to-morrow. And when this old fellow," pointing upward to his great windmill, "gets through with it, I shall have the finest flour in the world."

"It is very little either you or your mill could do if the Sprite of the Windmill didn't help you," replied the old man

"What are you talking about, Old Jacob?" asked Jan. "A sprite, did you say? I never heard of such a person."

"Well, I'll tell you the story," answered the

old man. "And you may be sure it is true, for my grandfather, who was a wise old man, told it to me, and he had it from his grandfather, who was still wiser, and he got it from —"

"Never mind all that," interrupted Jan, rudely. "Tell me the story and have done with it. I can't stand here all day listening to your nonsense."

Old Jacob looked at him sharply for a moment, then he told this wonderful story.

"Many years ago, a poor farmer, who lived just where your great windmill stands, was working one day trying to drain a field which had become flooded. And very hard, tiresome work it was, for there were no windmills in those days to help people. As he stopped for a minute to straighten his aching back, he heard a little, weak voice calling 'Help! Help! Help!' The farmer looked all around, but could see no one. He turned once more to his work, when again he heard the cry, but this time weaker than before.

"'I must find out who is in trouble and help him,' he said to himself, for he was always kind.

"The voice seemed to come from his wooden shoes that he had left at a little distance. But how could any one hide in such small space! However, in those olden days one never could tell what would happen next, so the farmer picked up one of his wooden shoes. He searched it carefully, and shook it, but there was nothing there. Then he lifted the other, and, oh dear! he almost dropped it again in his astonishment, for there on the ground under it lay the queerest little fairy in the world. He was dressed just like the farmer himself, — baggy trousers, wooden shoes and all, for you see he was a Dutch fairy. But on his head he wore a tiny golden crown.

"Tenderly the good farmer lifted him from the ground. At first he thought the poor fairy was dead. But as he looked at him, the wee man opened his eyes and shuddered.

"'Poor little fellow!' said the farmer. 'I am so sorry that I hurt you. I did not see you, or I should never have done it.'

"'You could not see me,' replied the fairy, 'for when you threw your shoe down, I was hidden under the tall grass. But oh! oh! if you had come a minute later, I should have died. Why did you take off your shoes?'

"'I am draining my field, which has been flooded for weeks,' answered the farmer.

"'Well! well! I must see about that,' was all the fairy answered.

"'I am going to carry you to my house,' said the farmer. 'My good wife will bake. a little cake for you and give you a drink of milk. Then you will feel better.'

"'Thank you,' said the fairy, smiling gratefully. So the farmer carried him home.

"'Hurry, good wife,' he called, as he placed the fairy on the table. 'I have brought company for

dinner. Bake the little man a cake and give him some milk.'

"'In a moment,' replied his wife, 'but first I must grind some grain.'

"Placing a handful of wheat between two heavy flat stones, she slowly ground it into flour.

"'Is that the way you grind your grain?' asked the fairy.

"'Yes,' answered the woman. 'Do you know of any better way?'

"'Well! well! I must see about that,' was the fairy's only answer.

"When the little man had finished his cake and milk he called the farmer to him.

"'I am the king of all the Dutch fairies,' he said, touching his golden crown with a tiny finger. 'You have been very kind to me, and I want to do something to help you. It must be very hard work draining the land as you do, and grinding grain as your good wife does. I shall show you better ways to do these two things. You will see me again to-morrow.' And without another word he vanished.

"Next morning when the farmer turned the corner of the barn on the way to his fields he suddenly stopped in speechless astonishment. For before him stood two of the strangest buildings with great flapping arms. What could they be!

"'How do you like your new windmills?' asked a tiny voice at his feet.

"The farmer looked down. There stood the fairy king.

"'Is that what you call them? Windmills? I never heard the name before. Where did they come from? What are they good for?' asked the bewildered farmer.

"'Yes, they are windmills. Some of my fairies built them for you. The one at the right will drain your fields for you. The one on the left will grind your corn.'

"'But how?' asked the puzzled man.

"'I told you yesterday that I am the king of all the Dutch fairies. In each mill I have placed one of my wind fairies, who will run the mill. Tell your neighbors to build mills like yours and I will send a fairy to each. They will all serve me, for I am their king, the Sprite of the Windmill. *Help others, and we will gladly help all.*'

"The farmer turned his wondering gaze from the mills to thank the Sprite, but he had vanished. The farmer noticed, however, that the arms of the gristmill were turning faster and faster, so he concluded the Sprite of the Windmill had taken that mill for his own.

"When the neighbors heard the farmer's good story you may be sure they built mills quickly, and no sooner was a mill finished than a wind fairy began work in it. And," said the old man, "that is how we first got our windmills."

"Do you mean to tell me that you believe that story is true?" asked Jan.

"Certainly it is true. Every one in Holland knows it is," replied Old Jacob.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" laughed Jan. "My windmills go in spite of fairies. No fairy turns them and no fairy can stop them. Don't think I'll believe such nonsense. What a yarn! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" sounded in faint echo from the top of the big mill.

Jan did not notice this, as he was hurrying indoors. But Old Jacob heard it and looked up. For just an instant he saw the quaint little figure of the Sprite of the Mill, sitting astride one of the great arms, — then with another faint "Ha! Ha! Ha!" the fairy disappeared.

Part II

Next morning Jan began to harvest his grain. Scores of men worked busily from morning to night, cutting and binding the golden sheaves. Jan directed the men and at the same time worked more busily than any of them. But busy as he was, Old Jacob's story kept coming back to him.

"What nonsense!" he would mutter to himself from time to time. Then he would glance up at his giant mill and laugh aloud at the idea of a

tiny fairy running it. But try as he would, he couldn't keep the strange story out of his mind.

At last the grain was all gathered and ready for the mill. Such a harvest had never been seen before! The grinding must begin at once, for even Jan's great mill would have to run for weeks to turn so much grain into flour.

The hopper was filled, everything was in readiness; but the millstones didn't move. Jan ran out and looked up at the arms of the windmill. There they hung quite motionless.

"Whatever can be the matter?" cried Jan.

"The Sprite of the Windmill," replied Old Jacob, who appeared suddenly, coming from no one knew where.

"Nonsense!" answered Jan. "There is no wind."

"Look at your neighbors' mills," said Old Jacob, calmly. Sure enough, they were all turning merrily in the autumn breeze.

"My sails will catch the wind before long," said Jan. "Just wait and see."

But Old Jacob's strange story really began to trouble Jan. What if it were true? what if the wind fairy had left his mill for some reason? He said nothing, but waited and watched anxiously. The breeze became brisker and sharper until a strong wind was blowing; but still the great arms hung idle.

Jan sent far and wide for clever workmen, who examined the mill in all its parts. One did this, another did that, but all in vain. There the mill stood through calm and storm, through gentle breeze and violent gale, but not one inch did the arms move.

So days and weeks passed. Jan's neighbors were finishing their grinding. But Jan's mill stood motionless; not a kernel of his grain had been ground. The neighbors wondered; some became really alarmed. Finally the report spread

that Jan Van Vedder had offended the good spirits of the air, and that they were taking this means of punishing him.

Jan still tried to laugh at the idea that the Sprite had anything to do with his mill's failure to work. But at last, after spending much money in repairs, he was compelled to abandon all hope of grinding his grain in that mill. So he then turned to his neighbors whose own grinding was done, and sought to hire them to grind his wheat in their mills. But to his surprise and anger he could find no one to grind a single peck for him, — not even when he offered one half for the grinding. Some gave one excuse, some another; the real truth was that few wanted to help a man who had never helped others. Still, there were some who would have ground for him, — but they did not dare. They feared to call down on themselves and their mills the wrath of the spirits who were punishing Jan so severely.

Now came on the late autumn storms. One night the rain came down in torrents all the night long. In the morning the broad, low fields were flooded in every direction. But the winds were strong, and the tireless windmills turned busily, pumping the water up into the canals, so that the flooded meadows were soon drained — all but Jan's; his mills would not move.

Jan now became thoroughly alarmed. The waters rose higher and higher over his meadows; then, one night, there came a sudden break in the dike just back of his barns and gristmill. The floods poured in, so that his great unground harvest of wheat was soon soaked and ruined; his pigs and some of his cows were drowned. Jan sent in haste for Old Jacob, who came at once.

"Old Jacob," said Jan, "I was wrong. I am sure now that there is a Sprite of the Windmill. Do tell me what I have done to drive him away; what can I do to coax him back to my mills?"

"Do you remember the last words of the Sprite of the Windmill?" asked Old Jacob. "'*Help others, and we will gladly help all.*'"

"Old Jacob, Old Jacob," cried Jan, "I understand; I have been proud and selfish. I have not helped others and so have lost the services of the Sprite of the Mill. What shall I do? Only help me to right the wrong I have done, and to regain the help of the fairies, and no man in Holland shall be more generous and kind than I."

"Well, then, there is Hans Bruckner's family," said Old Jacob. "Why not begin with them?"

"I will!" exclaimed Jan. "Tell me how."

"To-morrow will be Christmas Day," replied Old Jacob. "As you know, to-night St. Nicholas will be busy all over the land leaving gifts and greetings from friend to friend. Why not help him? He will surely be pleased to have your help."

"Just the thing," cried Jan. "Come in, Old Jacob, and help me plan it all out."

Christmas Eve, good mother Bruckner was putting her little ones to bed. A sad time it was for them all. For well they knew that good St.

Nicholas would soon be leaving gifts at the different homes. But, alas! there would be none for them. Poor little Hans could scarcely keep from crying when his mother told him gently that there would really be nothing in his wooden shoe on Christmas morning.

Suddenly there was a loud knocking at the door — "rap-a-tap-tap-tap!"

"It's St. Nicholas come after all!" cried Hans, as he bounded to the door and threw it open.

No St. Nicholas was in sight; but he had surely been there, for the steps were heaped high with bundles of all sizes and shapes. Quickly the mother and eager children dragged them into the house. I wish you and I could have been there as parcel after parcel was opened, and could have seen the happy faces and heard the joyful shouts of the happiest children in Holland that Christmas Eve! Such stores of food, and clothes, and toys! The poor children had never seen so many good things in all their lives before.

"I knew St. Nicholas wouldn't forget us!" shouted little Hans.

How happy they all were! Too happy and too completely absorbed in their unexpected gifts to look about them. Had they done so, they

might have seen two queer faces pressed close against the panes of the little back window. Jan and Old Jacob eagerly watched every movement of the happy little group. They found it difficult not to join in the joyful shouts of the family as each new bundle was undone.

When, at last, they turned away homeward, Jan said: "I was never so happy before in all my life! Never will I be selfish again!"

Next morning, Jan awoke to the music of the Christmas bells ringing out their messages of love and good will. Never had he felt so happy, so full of love toward all men! He had even forgotten his trouble about his windmills. Just as he finished dressing, Old Jacob entered his room.

"Merry Christmas, Jan," he cried. "Come out; here is a visitor for you."

"And very welcome he is, be he king or beggar, who visits me this Christmas Day," answered Jan. "But where is my visitor?"

"There," replied Jacob, pointing to the mill.

Jan glanced up. The giant arms were turning briskly, as though glad to be at work again. And whether it was the bright sun that dazzled his eyes, or whether it really was as he said, Jan declared that he caught a fleeting glimpse of the Sprite of the Windmill, and that he was smiling.

From that Christmas Day, Jan Van Vedder was known throughout Holland as the friend and helper of every one in trouble; no one appealed to him in vain.

The fairies still turn the windmills of Holland. If you do not believe this is true, you may visit Holland and see for yourselves.

ROBIN REDBREAST

Good-by, good-by to summer!
For summer's nearly done;
The garden smiling faintly,
Cool breezes in the sun;

Our thrushes now are silent,
Our swallows flown away, —
But Robin's here, in coat of brown,
And ruddy breast knot gay.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
Robin sings so sweetly
In the falling of the year.

Bright yellow, red, and orange,
The leaves come down in hosts;
The trees are Indian princes,
But soon they'll turn to ghosts;
The leathery pears and apples
Hang russet on the bough;
It's autumn, autumn, autumn late,
'Twill soon be winter now.
Robin, Robin Redbreast,
O Robin dear!
And what will this poor Robin do?
For pinching days are near.

The fireside for the cricket,
  The wheat stack for the mouse,
When trembling night winds whistle
  And moan all round the house.
The frosty ways like iron,
  The branches plumed with snow, —
Alas! in winter dead and dark,
  Where can poor Robin go?
    Robin, Robin Redbreast,
      O Robin dear!
And a crumb of bread for Robin,
  His little heart to cheer!

—William Allingham.

The trees' early leaf buds were bursting their brown;

"Shall I take them away?" said the frost, sweeping down.

"No, leave them alone
Till the blossoms are grown,"
Prayed the tree, while she trembled from root to
let to crown.

The tree bore her blossoms and all the birds
sung;
"Shall I take them away?" said the wind as
he swung.
"No, leave them alone
Till the cherries are grown,"
Said the tree, while her leaflets quivering hung.

The tree bore her fruit in the midsummer
glow;
Said the child, "May I gather the cherries
now?"
"Yes, all thou canst see;
Take them; all are for thee,"
Said the tree, while she bent down her laden
boughs low.

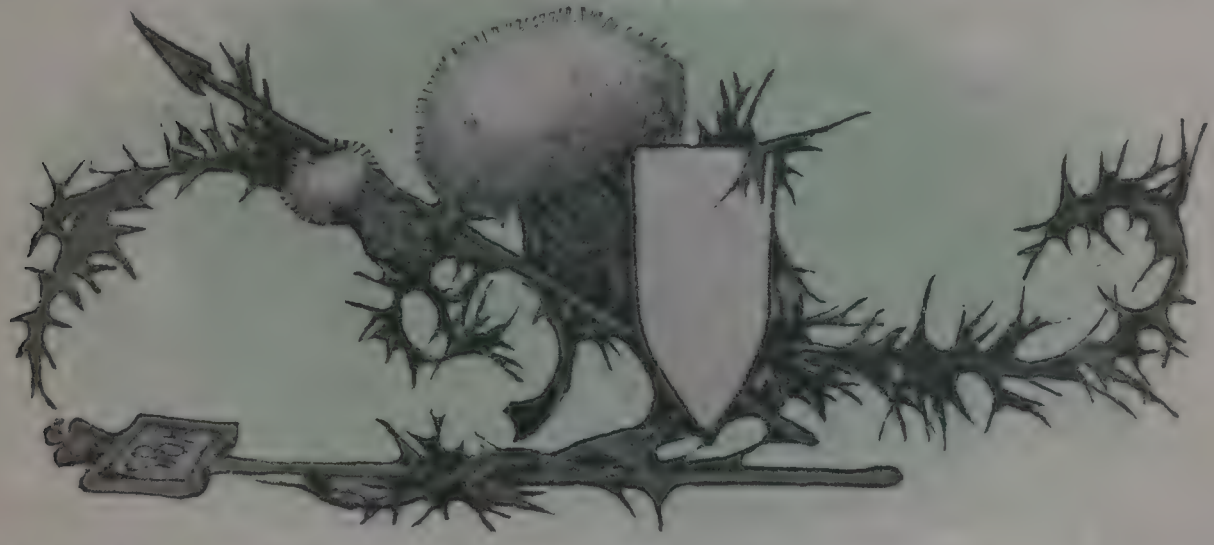
—Bjornstjerne Bjornson.

That's Why Stories

THE THISTLE

Did you ever try to pick a thistle? How quickly you let go! And you did well if you didn't cry out with pain. Every leaf is covered with sharp needles. And, my, how they prick!

Who could like such a wicked flower as the thistle! And yet there are people who do like



it. The Scots love the thistle more than any other flower that grows. They think so much of it, that they put a picture of it on their flag.

Shall I tell you why the Scots love the thistle?

Many years ago, no one knows just how many,

an army had come to Scotland from across the sea. They were Roman soldiers, and they had come to take Scotland for themselves.

But the Scots loved their country as you love yours. And they were very brave. They would die rather than give up their native land. So they fought the Romans, trying to drive them away.

But the Romans were brave, too, and they liked to fight. So they fought and fought in many battles. At last there came a day when it seemed as though the Romans were about to win. Many of the brave Scottish soldiers had been killed. All that were left of their little army were very tired, for they had been fighting day and night. They must have sleep and rest or they would all fall in the next battle. As night came on, their leader marched them through the gathering darkness to the top of a hill.

"Here, soldiers," said the brave leader, "we will rest this night. To-morrow we must fight

one more battle. That will be our last, for we will either win or die."

"Aye, aye," answered the brave fellows.

Four soldiers were ordered to watch, lest the Romans should steal upon them while they slept.

Soon all was still in the little camp. Only the four guards were awake. But they, too, were very tired. One after the other they dropped asleep. Now every soul is sleeping soundly.

But the Romans are wide awake. They are quietly gathering all around the hill. They have orders not to speak a word, not to make a sound. Slowly and softly they creep up the hillsides. Closer and closer they draw their line around the sleeping soldiers. A few minutes, and Scotland will be theirs.

A yell, a shriek, breaks the awful stillness of the night! The Scots spring to their feet, sword in hand. They charge down the hillsides, cutting the surprised Romans in pieces.

The battle is short, for the Romans are tired, while the Scots are rested. A few minutes of sharp fighting, and Scotland is safe. As their leader had said, it was the Scots' last battle.

But how did it all happen? Who gave the yell which aroused the sleeping soldiers? The four guards confessed in shame that they had been asleep and were awakened with the rest.

As they were wondering and talking about this strange yell, a soldier came up the hillside into the camp. He was bringing with him a Roman prisoner badly wounded.

"I can tell you who gave that yell," said the latter. "It was I, a proud Roman soldier. Oh, the shame of it! Would that I had not lived to see this day! In the darkness I stepped with my bare foot on a wretched little thistle. And I yelled with the sudden pain just like any schoolboy. So I betrayed my army. Let me die."

The Scottish soldiers blessed the little pricky

thistle that had saved their lives and had saved Scotland. So, now do you wonder that all Scots love the thistle? Do you wonder that the Scottish flag bears a picture of this flower?

THE WIND IN A FROLIC

The wind one morning sprang up from sleep,
Saying, "Now for a frolic! Now for a leap!
Now for a madcap, galloping chase!
I'll make a commotion in every place!"
So it swept with a bustle right through a great town,
Creaking the signs, and scattering down
Shutters, and whisking, with merciless squalls,
Old women's bonnets and gingerbread stalls.
There never was heard a much lustier shout,
As the apples and oranges tumbled about;
And the urchins that stand with their thievish eyes
Forever on watch ran off with each prize.

Then away to the field it went blustering and
humming,
And the cattle all wondered whatever was coming.
It plucked by their tails the grave matronly cows,
And tossed the colts' manes all about their
brows,
Till offended at such a familiar salute,
They all turned their backs and stood silently mute.
So on it went capering and playing its pranks;
Whistling with reeds on the broad river banks;
Puffing the birds as they sat on the spray,
Or the traveler grave on the king's highway.
It was not too nice to bustle the bags
Of the beggar and flutter his dirty rags.
'Twas so bold that it feared not to play its joke
With the doctor's wig and the gentleman's cloak.
Through the forest it roared, and cried gaily, "Now,
You sturdy old oaks, I'll make you bow!"
And it made them bow without more ado,
Or it cracked their branches through and through.

Then it rushed like a monster o'er cottage and
farm,
Striking their inmates with sudden alarm;
And they ran out like bees in a midsummer
swarm.
There were dames with their kerchiefs tied over
their caps,
To see if their poultry were free from mishaps.
The turkeys they gobbled, the geese screamed
aloud,
And the hens crept to roost in a terrified crowd.
There was rearing of ladders and logs laying on,
Where the thatch from the roof threatened soon
to be gone.
But the wind had passed on and had met in a lane
With a schoolboy, who panted and struggled in
vain.
For it tossed him, and twirled him and passed,
and he stood
With his hat in a pool and his shoe in the mud.

THE KING AND THE TORTOISE

Long ago there lived in India a king who talked too much.

"I am the greatest king in India. My palace is the finest. My horses are the swiftest. I have more treasures than any other king." Thus he would talk from morning till night.

Such talk was only silly chatter. But sometimes the king told things that he should have kept secret, and this made trouble for his people.

Several of the wise men in India had told the king at different times that he talked too much. This always threw him into a great rage.

"Off with their heads!" he would cry. When his cruel order had been obeyed, he would glare on the other wise men, as though to say, "Would any of you like to offer unwelcome advice?"

Now the oldest and wisest of the king's advisers was Adulla. He often shook his wise old

head and muttered: "I but bide my time. Some day I shall teach the king a lesson."

One morning the king and Adulla were walking in the courtyard of the palace. Suddenly the king stopped, and pointing to a black object on the stones, said, "What is that, Adulla?"

"That, Sire," said Adulla, "is a dead tortoise."

"How came it here?" asked the king.

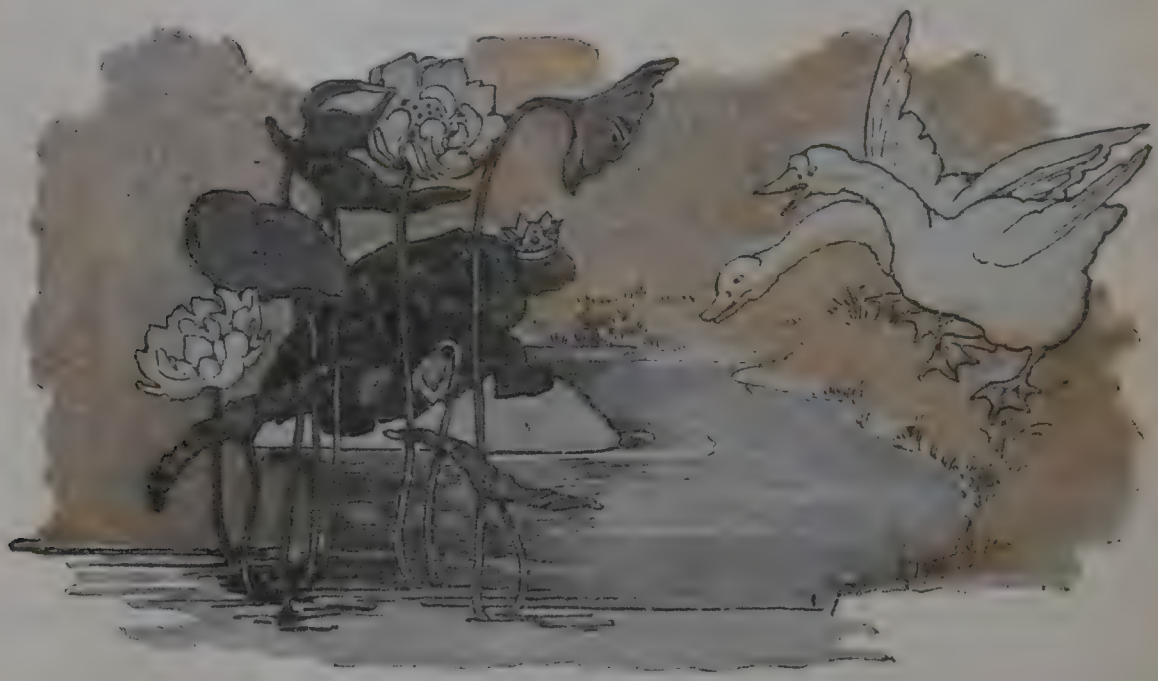
"O Sire," replied Adulla, "know that in the pond, White Lotus, live many tortoises. One was larger and stronger than his fellows, so he ruled over them. He was a great chatterer. 'I am the biggest tortoise in this pond. My shell is the broadest. My eyes are the brightest. I can dive deepest.' Thus he talked continually.

"Now it chanced that two wild geese spent some weeks at White Lotus. They and the tortoise became great friends. When they were ready to return to their home, one goose said, 'O Great Tortoise, how we wish we might take you with us!'

"'Alas!' answered the other, 'he cannot fly.'

"'I know how it can be managed,' said the tortoise. 'I will take hold of the middle of this stick. If each of you will take hold of an end, you can easily fly with me to your home.'

"'But remember, friend Tortoise,' said the geese, 'you must not speak a word while we are flying.



If you do, you will fall to the earth and be dashed to pieces.'

"All went well until the geese were flying over

this courtyard. Then the sentry near yonder door chanced to look up. When he saw the two geese flying along and carrying a tortoise between them, he was filled with amazement.

"'I wish I knew which of the three was bright enough to think of that scheme,' he said aloud.

"The temptation to tell of his brightness was too strong to be resisted. The tortoise opened his mouth to say, 'I thought of this clever scheme,' but he had spoken once too often, as you may see," said Adulla, pointing to the crushed tortoise.

For a moment the king looked keenly at Adulla. Then he nodded his head and muttered, "Yes, I see."

Turning quickly, he walked into the palace. But from that day it was noticed that the king talked less and listened more to his advisers, especially to Adulla. And Adulla was often heard muttering: "I bided my time, and my time came. My time came. The king has learned his lesson."

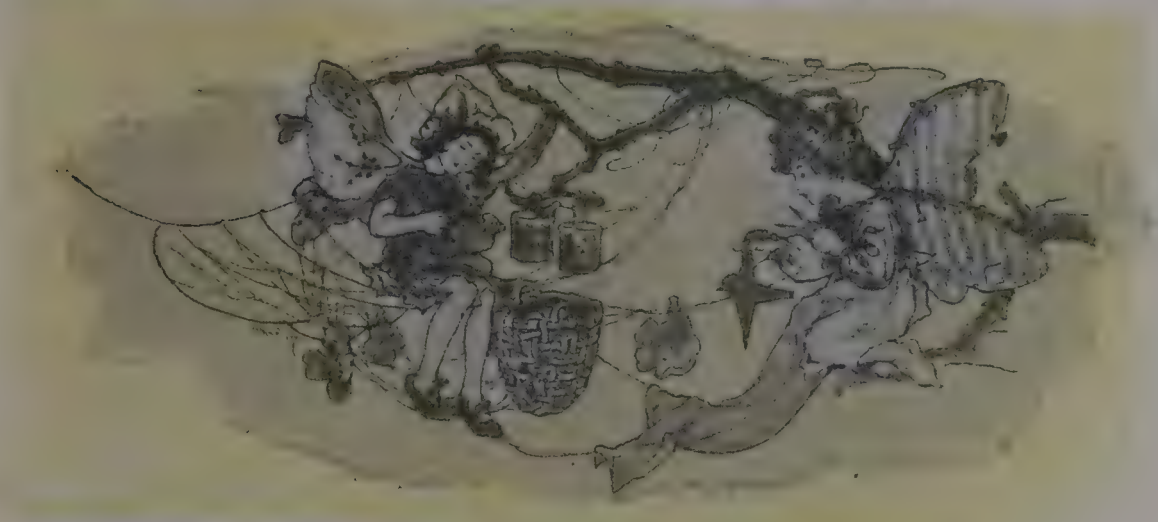
THE BLUE JAY

O Blue Jay up in the maple tree,
Shaking your throat with such bursts of glee,
How did you happen to be so blue?
Did you steal a bit of the lake for your crest,
And fasten blue violets into your vest?
Tell me, I pray you, — tell me true!

Did you dip your wings in azure dye,
When April began to paint the sky,
That was pale with the winter's stay?
Or were you hatched from a bluebell bright,
'Neath the warm, gold breast of a sunbeam light,
By the river one blue spring day?

O Blue Jay up in the maple tree,
A-tossing your saucy head at me,
With ne'er a word for my questioning,
Pray, cease for a moment your "ting-a-link,"
And hear when I tell you what I think, —
You bonniest bit of the spring.

I think when the fairies made the flowers,
To grow in these mossy fields of ours,
Periwinkles and violets rare,
There was left of the spring's own color blue,
Plenty to fashion a flower whose hue
Would be richer than all and as fair.



So, putting their wits together, they
Made one great blossom so bright and gay,
The lily beside it seemed blurred;
And then they said, "We will toss it in air;
So many blue blossoms grow everywhere,
Let this pretty one be a bird!"

—Susan Hartley Swett.

THE THROSTLE

"Summer is coming, summer is coming,
I know it, I know it, I know it,
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again,"
Yes, my little wild poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue,
Last year you sang it as gladly,
"New, new, new!" Is it then so new
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again, young again,"
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again, here, here, happy year!"
O, warble unchidden, unbidden!
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden.

— Alfred Tennyson.

TREASURE TROVE

Through the forest idly,
As my steps I bent,
With a free and happy heart,
Singing as I went,

Growing in a shady nook
A floweret I did spy,
Bright as any star in heaven,
Sweet as any eye.

Down to pluck it stooping,
  Thus to me it said,
"Wherefore pluck me only
  To wither and to fade?"

Up with its roots I dug it,
  I bore it as it grew,
And in my garden plot at home
  I planted it anew,

All in a still and shady place,
  Beside my home so dear;
And now it thanks me for my pains
  And blossoms all the year.

— GOETHE.

THE KNIGHT OF THE SILVER ARROWS

In the days of Long Ago there lived in the far North Country a brave knight.

He fought not for gold nor for fame, but for the right. Was any one wronged? Did the strong oppress the weak? Did the wicked harm the good? — our knight fought for the oppressed.

Besides being the bravest knight in Northland, he was the strongest and most beautiful. His armor was green and gold; his weapons, a long sharp sword and a quiver of beautiful silver arrows tipped with white feathers.

When he rode abroad he was splendid to look upon. His shield bore the motto, "Dare, Dare, and Dare Again." All the people loved him. When they saw him riding forth to battle, they bowed low before him, shouting:

"Hail, brave knight, — knight fearless in battle — knight kindest in peace — knight loved by all — our knight, our knight of the Silver Arrows!"

One bright April morning, the knight of the Silver Arrows rode out seeking adventure. He

rode slowly, for the country was very beautiful and he lingered, enjoying the fair blossoms and joyous birds that lived by the roadside.

Suddenly a low, mournful sound reached his ears. Louder and more doleful it grew until it shut out the songs of the birds and the laughing brook. Touching his horse with the spur, he dashed forward in the direction from whence the sound came. As he turned a bend in the road, he came upon a strange sight. A large company was marching out of a walled town. First came a number of old women, weeping and wailing and wringing their hands. Next came a beautiful maiden, clothed in white, with a wreath of flowers on her head, and golden flowers in her little hands. Very beautiful she was, but oh, how sad! After her came all the people of the village weeping and moaning.

"What means this great sorrowing?" asked the knight, halting before the procession. They

stopped weeping for a moment and looked at him. No one answered. The knight repeated his

question. Then the maiden answered, "Sir Knight, it is the day of yearly sacrifice."

"What meanest thou, fair maiden?" asked the knight.

"Know then, Sir Knight," replied the maiden, "a horrible dragon, covered with scales of iron,

and breathing out fire, lives in the valley behind yonder hill. Ever and anon he broke into our village and carried off a youth or a maiden. At last he promised that, if every year when the spring returns to our land, a youth or a maiden were brought to him, he would cease to enter our village. Every year, therefore, some one is offered a sacrifice to the dragon. This year I am the victim."

As she ceased speaking, the people again began their weeping and wailing.

The knight raised his hand for silence.

"Has no one met this dragon or tried to overcome him?" he asked.

"Yes, Sir Knight, many a brave man has tried, but all have been killed by the fiery breath of the monster. Now no man dare meet him."

"See my motto," said the knight, holding his shield before them. "I 'Dare, Dare, and Dare Again.' Show me where this dragon lives, and I will overcome him or lose my life in the attempt."

The people tried to coax him not to risk his life, but in vain. "Lead on," said he; "I will follow."

Soon they came to the hill overlooking the valley where the dragon lived. "See, yonder is his cave," the maiden said, pointing to a deep, dark hole.

"Wait here," said the knight. "I will enter the valley alone."

As he approached the cave, he called in a loud voice, "Sir Dragon, Sir Dragon, come forth and receive your yearly sacrifice!"

Slowly the dragon crept from his dark den. How horrible he looked in the bright sunlight! His eyes shone like balls of fire. His body was covered with iron scales as large as dinner plates. For a moment he winked and blinked in the sunlight. Then his eyes fell upon the knight.

When he saw a knight in armor instead of the delicate maiden he had expected, he uttered a snort

of rage. Quickly he darted at the knight, breathing out fire, and lashing the air with his scaly tail.

Drawing his long, sharp sword, the knight rushed to meet him. He thrust his sword between the iron scales and wounded the dragon. But the knight was so badly burned by the fiery breath of the monster that he staggered back and fell to the ground.

"He is dead! He is dead!" shouted the people from the hilltop. The dragon also thought the knight was dead and started to crawl back into his cave to care for his wounds.

But the knight was not dead. Slowly he rose to his feet. Carefully and surely he shot his silver arrows. Every one hit the dragon between the iron scales that covered him or pierced his eyes. One after another the arrows flew home, swift and true, until not one remained in the quiver. But no more were needed. The horrible dragon lay dead at the door of his cave.

Then what a shout the people on the hillside raised! "Hail! hail! hail! Hail to our deliverer! Hail to the knight of the Silver Arrows."

But while they still shouted, the knight sank slowly back on the green grass. The fiery breath of the dragon had indeed killed him.

Quickly the people gathered around him. Their joy was changed to sorrow; their shouting to mourning. Sadly they buried him in the beautiful valley on the spot where he fell, and they returned to their homes sorrowing.

Next morning, when some of the people returned to his grave, they found a little yellow flower growing on it.

"See," they said, "it is our knight. Behold the gold of the flower and the green of the leaves — the colors of his armor."

"Yes," replied the maiden, "and observe the shape of the leaf. It is long and sharp like our knight's sword."

When next the people visited the grave, the golden flower was gone. In its place was a round, white feathery ball.

"Behold," said the maiden, "it is his quiver of arrows." She stooped and pulled out one of

the fuzzy darts. Sure enough, it was shaped like an arrow tipped with little white feathers!

Just then the wind blew through the valley,

and the tiny arrows flew in every direction. Wherever they struck the earth a new golden flower grew in time.

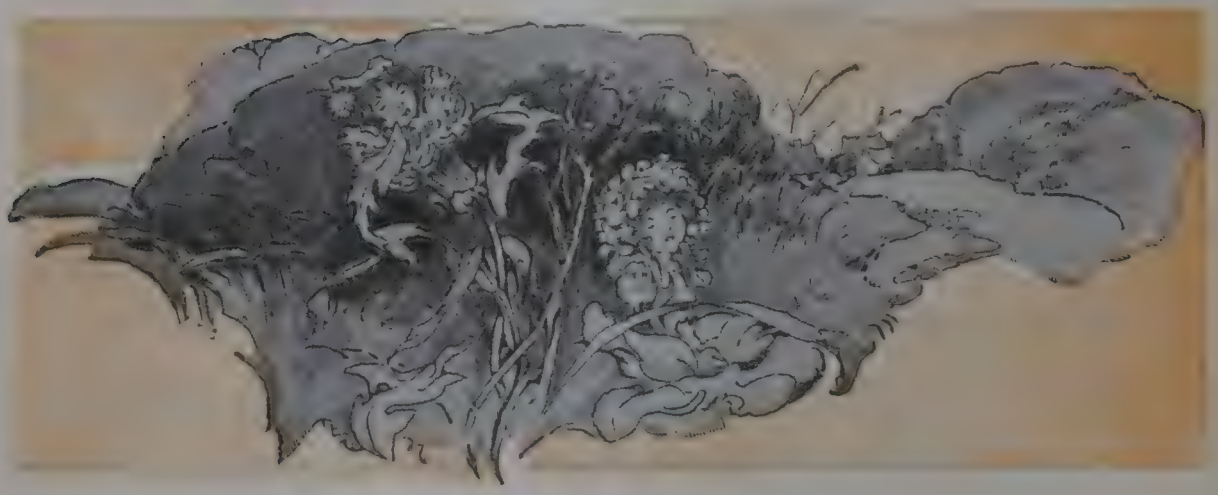
Every spring these brave golden flowers return to the earth. In the beginning they have long swordlike leaves to remind us that the brave knight fought first with his sword. Later they are covered with silver arrows which they shoot in every direction.

We call this flower the dandelion, but its first name was the Knight of the Silver Arrows, and the motto of both knight and flower remains ever the same, "Dare, Dare, and Dare Again!"

YOUNG DANDELION

Young Dandelion
On a hedge side,
Said young Dandelion,
"Who'll be my bride?

"I'm a bold fellow
As ever was seen,
With my shield of yellow,
In the grass green.



"You may uproot me
From field and from lane,
Trample me, cut me, —
I spring up again.

"I never flinch, sir,
Wherever I dwell;
Give me an inch, sir,
I'll soon take an ell.

"Drive me from garden
In anger and pride,
I'll thrive and harden
By the roadside.

"Not a bit fearful,
Showing my face,
Always so cheerful
In every place,"

Said young Dandelion,
With a sweet air,
"I have my eye on
Miss Daisy fair.

"Though we may tarry
Till past the cold,
Her will I marry
Ere I grow old.

"I will protect her
From all kinds of harm,
Feed her with nectar,
Shelter her warm.

"Whate'er the weather,
Let it go by;
We'll hold together,
Daisy and I.

"I'll ne'er give in,—no!
Nothing I fear:
All that I win, oh!
I'll keep for my dear."

Said young Dandelion
On his hedge side,
"Who'll me rely on?
Who'll be my bride?"

—Dinah Maria Mulock.

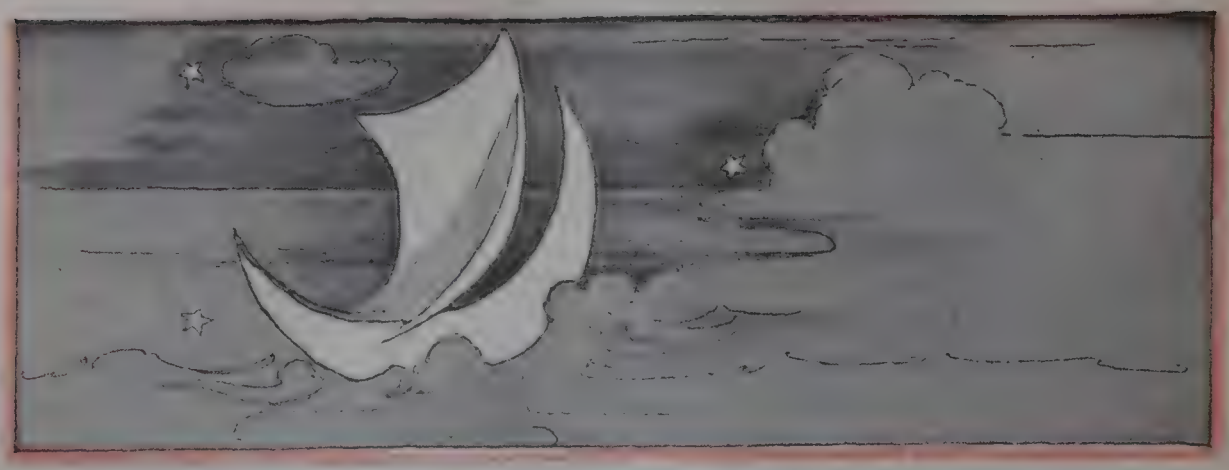
THE SILVER BOAT

There is a boat upon a sea;
It never stops for you or me.
The sea is blue, the boat is white;
It sails through winter and summer night.

The swarthy child in India land
Points to the prow with eager hand;
The little Lapland babies cry
For the silver boat a-sailing by.

It fears no gale, it fears no wreck;
It never meets a change or check
Through weather fine or weather wild;
The oldest saw it when a child.

Upon another sea below
Full many vessels come and go;
Upon the swaying, swinging tide
Into the distant worlds they ride.



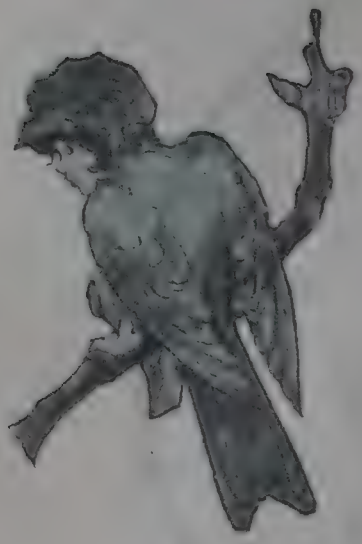
And strange to tell, the sea below,
Where countless vessels come and go,
Obeys the little boat on high
Through all the centuries sailing by.

SUMMER

Summer days for me,
When every leaf is on its tree;
When Robin's not a beggar,
And Jenny Wren's a bride;
And larks hang singing, singing, singing,
Over the wheat fields wide.

— Christina Rossetti.

When
Animals
Talked



THE TAR BABY

In the good old days when fairies, hobgoblins, witches, and giants lived on the earth, and when animals talked with people, a rabbit and a goat lived in the same neighborhood, not far from each other.

One morning Brother Goat called on Brother Rabbit. "Brother Rabbit," said he, "I have a fine idea! Come with me and we will dig a well between our homes. Then we can have all the water we need without taking that long journey to the river."

"Not so, Brother Goat. Why should I work to dig a well? At daybreak I drink the dew from the flowers. There I find all the water I need."

"As you please," replied Brother Goat. "Alone I will dig the well, and alone I will drink the cool water."

Brother Goat then went to the foot of a big

poplar and began to dig his well. How his sharp horns threw up the dirt! Soon the well was finished, and the clear, cool water came bubbling up.

"Ah!" said Brother Goat, after quenching his thirst, "Brother Rabbit will like to drink of this fine water, but not a drop shall he have."

Brother Rabbit, who was hiding behind a bush near by, laughed heartily.

"Ha! Ha! Ha!" said he to himself, "what a foolish creature Brother Goat is, to be sure. I shall drink all the water I want."

That night, when Brother Goat was fast asleep, Brother Rabbit made his way silently through the thick bushes till he came to the well. There he drank a deep draught and laughed again to think how he had fooled Brother Goat.

But the next day, when Brother Goat returned to his well to get some water, he saw the rabbit's tracks in the soft mud.

"Ah, ha! Brother Rabbit," he said to himself,

"that is how you drink the dew from the flowers. Well, I'll see about this. I think I'll catch you yet."

Brother Goat hurried off home and made a doll of wood, as big as a baby. When it was finished he covered it with tar, black, soft, and sticky. It now looked exactly like a little negro baby.

At sunset he placed this tar baby beside the well and went softly home, chuckling to himself all the way.

By and by Brother Rabbit came hopping cautiously through the bushes. He looked first to the right, then to the left. Not seeing any one, he finally approached the well. When he saw the tar baby, he sat straight up on his haunches and looked at it with astonishment.

"What can it be?" he said to himself. He listened, trembling, fearing either to come nearer or to go back. At length, seeing the tar baby didn't move, he gained courage and spoke to it.

"Hullo!" he said.

But the tar baby said nothing.
Brother Rabbit went up a little closer.

"Who are you?" he asked.
The tar baby said nothing.
Brother Rabbit breathed more easily. He went up quite close to the tar baby.
"Why don't you answer me?" he shouted.
The tar baby said nothing.

"See here!" he exclaimed. "If you don't answer me, I'll hit your black face."

The tar baby said nothing.

Brother Rabbit raised his right hand and hit her — bam!

His hand stuck fast.

"What's this?" cried Brother Rabbit; "turn me loose, you imp! If you don't, I'll punch your woolly head."

The tar baby said nothing.

Then he hit her again — bim!

His left hand stuck fast.

Brother Rabbit, now thoroughly enraged, raised his right foot.

"Listen to me, you rascal!" he shrieked. "Do you see this foot? If you do not let go at once; I'll kick you."

The tar baby said nothing.

Biff! The right foot stuck fast. Brother Rabbit quickly raised the other.

"Do you see this foot?" he shrieked more fiercely than before. "If I hit you with this, you will think a thunderbolt has struck you. Do you hear me?"

The tar baby said nothing.

Baff! The left foot stuck fast.

"Watch out, now!" Brother Rabbit fairly screamed. "Many a time have I knocked the last breath out of people less saucy than you with my head. If I butt your ugly black head, it will be the end of you. Turn me loose! Oho! You won't answer?"

Buff! Brother Rabbit's head stuck fast.

"Negro girl," whined Brother Rabbit, "are you dead? Turn me loose! Oh! Turn me loose!"

The tar baby said nothing.

* * * * * * * *

Next morning when Brother Goat came to his well he found Brother Rabbit hugging tight to the tar baby.

"Hey, Brother Rabbit! What are you doing there? I thought you drank only the dew from the flowers. Aha, Brother Rabbit! Now I will punish you for stealing water from my well."

"I am your friend, Brother Goat; don't kill me," pleaded Brother Rabbit.

"Thief! thief!" cried Brother Goat, and then he ran quickly into the woods, gathered a pile of dry branches, and made a great fire. Returning, he tore Brother Rabbit loose from the tar baby, slung him over his shoulder, and marched off toward the fire. As he was passing a thicket of brambles, Brother Goat met his daughter.

"Where are you going, father?" she asked. "Throw wicked Brother Rabbit into the brambles, and come eat the fresh grass with me."

Brother Rabbit pretended to be in great terror.

"Oh, no, Brother Goat!" he quaked. "Don't throw me among the brambles. They will tear

my flesh and scratch my eyes out. Oh, I beg you, rather throw me in the fire!"

"Aha, Brother Rabbit!" chuckled Brother Goat, "you don't like brambles? Well, then, go and laugh in them!" And the pitiless Goat threw Brother Rabbit as far as he could.

Brother Rabbit fell in the midst of the brambles, leaped to his feet, and began to laugh.

"Ha! Ha! Ha! Brother Goat, I never had a better bed. I was born in a brier thicket."

Brother Goat was angry, but what could he do?

—Frederick Ortoli, *from "Tales of Evening," adapted.*

BABY SEED SONG

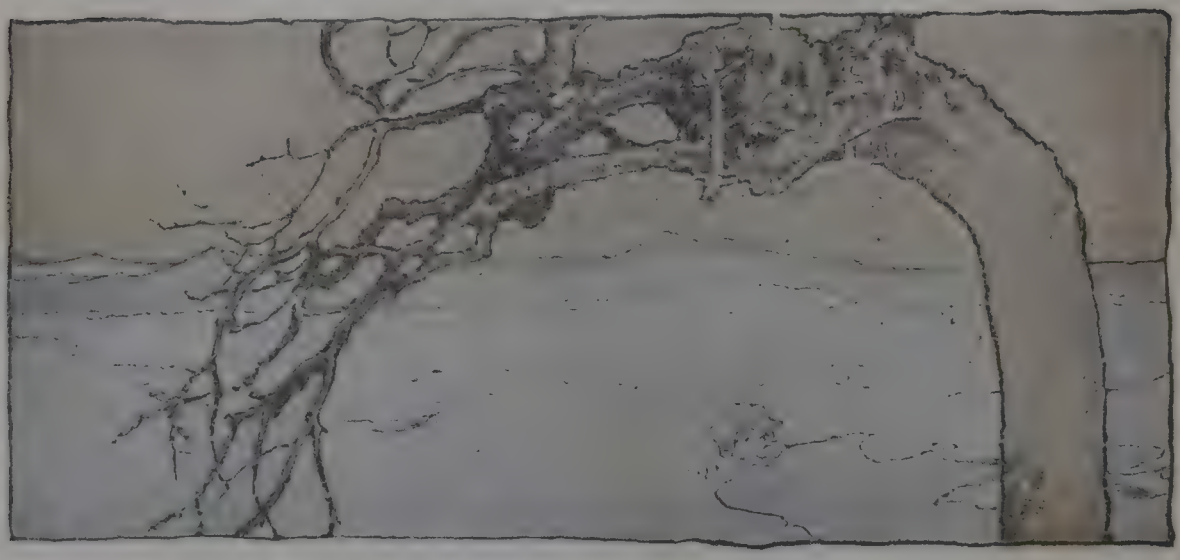
Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
  Are you awake in the dark?
Here we lie cosily, close to each other:
  Hark to the song of the lark—
"Waken!" the lark says, "waken and dress you;
  Put on your green coats and gay,

Blue sky will shine on you, sunshine caress
you—
Waken! 'tis morning—'tis May!"

Little brown brother, oh! little brown brother,
What kind of flower will you be?
I'll be a poppy—all white, like my mother;
Do be a poppy like me.

What! you're a sunflower? How I shall miss you
When you're grown golden and high!
But I shall send all the bees up to kiss you;
Little brown brother, good by.

"You think I am dead,"
The apple tree said,
"Because I have never a leaf to show—
Because I stoop,
And my branches droop,



And the dull gray mosses over me grow!
But I'm all alive in trunk and shoot;
The buds of next May
I fold away—
But I pity the withered grass at my root."

"You think I am dead,"
The quick grass said,
"Because I have parted with stem and blade;
But under the ground
I am safe and sound
With the snow's thick blanket over me laid.
I'm all alive, and ready to shoot,
Should the spring of the year
Come dancing here —
But I pity the flower without branch or root."

"You think I am dead,"
A soft voice said,
"Because not a branch or root I own!
I never have died,
But close I hide,
In a plumy seed that the wind has sown.
Patient I wait through the long winter hours;
You will see me again —
I shall laugh at you then,
Out of the eyes of a hundred flowers."

Oh, he's a rare clever fellow, is the Russet Dog, — the Fox, I suppose you call him. Have you ever heard the way he gets rid of his fleas? He hunts about and he hunts about till he finds a lock of wool; then he takes it in his mouth, and down he goes to the river and turns his tail to the stream, and goes in backwards. And as the water comes up to his haunches the little fleas come forward, and the more he dips into the river the more they come forward, till at last he has nothing but his snout and the lock of wool above water; then the little fleas rush to his snout and into the lock of wool. Down he dips his nose, and as soon as he feels his nose free of them, he lets go the lock of wool, and so he is free of his fleas.

Ah, but that is nothing to the way in which he catches ducks. He gathers some heather, and puts his head in the midst of it, and then slips

down stream to the place where the ducks are swimming, for all the world like a piece of floating heather. Then he lets go, and — gobble, gobble, gobble, till not a duck is left alive. And he is as brave as he is clever. It is said that once he found some bagpipes lying all alone, and being very hungry began to gnaw at them; but as soon as he made a hole in the bag, out came a squeal. Was the Russet Dog afraid? Never a bit; all he said was, "Here's music with my dinner."

Now a Russet Dog had noticed for some days a family of wrens, off which he wished to dine. He might have been satisfied with one, but he was determined to have the whole lot — father and eighteen sons — but all so like that he could not tell one from the other, or the father from the children.

"It is no use to kill one son," he said to himself, "because the old cock will take warning and fly away with the seventeen. I wish I knew which is the old gentleman."

He set his wits to work to find out, and one day, seeing them all threshing in a barn, he sat down to watch them; still he could not be sure.

"Now I have it," he said; "well done the old man's stroke! He hits true," he cried.

"Oh!" replied the one he thought the head of the family; "if you had seen my grandfather's strokes, you might have said that."

The sly fox pounced on the cock, ate him up in a trice, and then caught and disposed of the eighteen sons, all flying in terror about the barn.

* * * * * * * *

But Master Fox did not always have it his own way. One day he met a cock, and they began talking.

"How many tricks canst thou do?" said the fox.

"Well," said the cock, "I can do three; how many canst thou do thyself?"

"I can do threescore and thirteen," said the fox.

"What tricks canst thou do?" said the cock.

"Well," said the fox, "my grandfather used to shut one eye and give a great shout."

"I could do that myself," said the cock.

"Do it," said the fox. And the cock shut one eye and crowed as loud as ever he could, but he shut the eye that was next the fox, and the fox gripped him by the neck and ran away with him.

But the woman to whom the cock belonged saw him and cried out, "Let go the cock; he's mine."

"Say, 'Oh, sweet-tongued singer, it is my own cock,' wilt thou not?" said the cock to the fox.

Then the fox opened his mouth to say as the cock did, and he dropped the cock, who sprang up on the top of a house, and shut one eye and gave a loud crow.

* * * * * * * *

But it was through that very fox that Master Wolf lost his tail. Have you never heard that?

One day the wolf and the fox were out together, and they stole a dish of crowdie. Now in those days the wolf was the bigger beast of the two, and he had a long tail like a greyhound, and great teeth.

The fox was afraid of him, and did not dare to say a word when the wolf ate the most of the crowdie, and left only a little at the bottom of the dish for him, but he determined to punish

the wolf for it; so the next night when they were out together the fox pointed to the image of the moon in a pool left in the ice, and said: —

"I smell a nice cheese, and there it is, too."

"And how will you get it?" said the wolf.

"Well, stop you here till I see if the farmer is asleep; if you keep your tail on that cheese, nobody will see it or know that it is there. Keep your tail steady, now. I may be some time coming back."

So the wolf lay down and put his tail on the moonshine in the ice, and in a short time it was frozen fast. Then the fox, who had been watching, ran in to the farmer and said: "The wolf! he will eat up the children — the wolf! the wolf! Hurry!"

Then the farmer and his wife came out with sticks to kill the wolf, but the wolf ran off, leaving his tail behind him.

* * * * * * * *

One day shortly after this Master Fox chanced to see a fine cock and fat hen, off which he wished to dine, but at his approach they both jumped up into a tree. He did not lose heart, but soon began to make talk with them, inviting them at last to go a little way with him.

There was no danger, he said, nor fear of his hurting them, for there was peace between men and beasts, and among all animals.

At last after much parleying the cock said to the hen, "My dear, do you not see a couple of hounds coming across the field?"

"Yes," said the hen, "and they will soon be here."

"If that is the case, it is time I should be off," said the sly fox, "for I am afraid these stupid hounds may not have heard of the peace."

And with that he took to his heels and never drew breath till he reached his den.

* * * * * * * *

Once the fox and the wolf bought a field. It was oats that they set that year, and they reaped it and began to divide it.

"Well, then," said the fox, "wouldst thou rather have the root or the top? Thou shalt have thy choice."

"I'd rather have the root," said the wolf.

Then the fox had fine oaten bread all the year, and the other one had fodder.

The next year they set a crop; and it was potatoes that they set, and they grew well.

"Which wouldst thou like better, the root or the top, this year?" said the fox.

"Indeed, thou shalt not take the twist out of me any more; I will have the top this year," quoth the wolf.

"Good enough, my hero," said the fox.

Thus the wolf had the potato tops, and the fox the potatoes. But the wolf used to keep stealing the potatoes from the fox.

"Thou hadst best go yonder, and read the name that I have in the hoofs of the gray mare," quoth the fox.

Away went the wolf, and he began to read the name; and on a time of these times the white mare drew up her leg, and she broke the wolf's head.

"Oh!" said the fox, "it is long since I heard my name. Better to catch geese than to read books."

He went home, and the wolf was not troubling him any more.

But the Russet Dog found his match at last, as I shall tell you.

Going up a hillside one day after a hearty dinner of duck, he began to stroke his sides on the hill.

"Oh, king! how finely a bullet would spank upon my rib just now."

Who was listening but a hunter!

"I'll try that upon thee directly," said the hunter.

"Bad luck to this place," quoth the fox, "in which a creature dares not say a word in fun that is not taken in earnest."

The hunter put a bullet in his gun, and he fired at him and killed him, and that was the end of the Russet Dog.

— *From "More Celtic Fairy Tales."*

MERRY AUTUMN

It's all a farce, — these tales they tell
About the breezes sighing,
And moans astir o'er field and dell,
Because the year is dying.

Such principles are most absurd, —
I care not who first taught 'em;
There's nothing known to beast or bird
To make a solemn autumn.

A butterfly goes winging by;
A singing bird comes after;
And Nature all from earth to sky,
Is bubbling o'er with laughter.

The ripples wimple on the rills,
Like sparkling little lasses;
The sunlight runs along the hills,
And laughs among the grasses.

The earth is just so full of fun
It really can't contain it;
And streams of mirth so freely run
The heavens seem to rain it.

In solemn times, when grief holds sway
With countenance distressing,
You'll note the more of black and gray
Will then be used in dressing.

Now purple tints are all around;
The sky is blue and mellow;
And e'en the grasses turn the ground
From modest green to yellow.

The seed burs all with laughter crack
On featherweed and jimson;
And leaves that should be dressed in black
Are all decked out in crimson.

Don't talk to me of solemn days
In autumn's time of splendor,
Because the sun shows fewer rays,
And these grow slant and slender.

Why, it's the climax of the year,—
The highest time of living!—
Till naturally its bursting cheer
Just melts into thanksgiving.

—Paul Laurence Dunbar.

THE FOX, THE BEAR, AND THE FARMER

Once upon a time there was a poor farmer. One morning he went to a field to plow with his two cows; he was too poor to keep oxen. As he drove near the edge of the forest, he suddenly

heard a great noise of rustling and crackling, of growling and squeaking. Leaving his plow standing in the furrow, he crept softly to the wood and peered cautiously through the thick underbrush. There he saw a huge bear wrestling with a little hare. That struck the farmer

as the funniest sight he had ever seen. He laughed and laughed until it seemed he could never stop laughing. This made the bear very angry.

"What do you mean by laughing so at me?" he growled savagely.

The poor farmer was now as much frightened as he had been a moment before amused. He couldn't answer a word.

"I'll teach you not to laugh at me again," snarled the bear. "I am going to eat you and your two cows."

With these words the bear rushed up to the farmer with wide-open jaws.

The farmer now found his tongue and cried in terror: "Oh, please, Mr. Bear, I couldn't help laughing! I really couldn't! I beg you not to eat me. I promise never, never to laugh at you again."

"No, I think you will not laugh at me again. You won't have the chance," growled the bear.

"I am going to eat you and your two cows right on the spot."

The poor farmer now fell on his knees and begged with tears in his eyes that the bear would spare him and his two cows. But it was all in vain. The more piteously he begged, the more fiercely the beast declared that he should be eaten. Finally the farmer made one last appeal.

"Only let me live until evening, then, I beseech you, Mr. Bear, so that I can plow and sow this field. Then my family will not be without bread to eat when winter comes."

The bear consented sullenly and shambled off into the forest, while the farmer returned with a heavy heart to his plowing.

Toward noon a fox passed that way.

"Why are you looking so sad, my poor man?" asked the fox, kindly.

The farmer told him his trouble with the bear.

"Oh, if that is all," cried the fox, cheerfully, "I

can easily help you to save your own life and the lives of your two cows as well. And besides, you shall have the skin of that bear for a warm rug."

"But how can that be done, good Mr. Fox?"

"What will you give me if I tell you?"

At first the farmer did not know what to offer. Finally, however, it was agreed that he should give the fox nine hens and a rooster.

"Now listen to me," said the fox, "and do just as I tell you. When the bear comes for you this evening, I will be hiding in the bushes and blow just as the hunters do. Then the bear will ask, 'What is that?' and you must answer, 'The hunters are coming.' The bear will be frightened and beg you to conceal him. Thereupon you will make him crawl into this big sack and tell him not to stir. Then I will come out of the bushes and ask, 'What is in that sack?' You will reply, 'Blocks of wood.' I will not believe it, and will say, 'Hit it here on top

with your ax.' You will seize your ax and strike a mighty blow into the bear's head, so that he will die a horrible death on the spot."

The farmer was pleased with this advice, and he followed it to the letter. Everything happened as the fox had said it would. The bear fell into the trap, and the farmer and his cows were saved.

"Did I not tell you that it would happen just so?" said the fox. "Learn from this, my friend, that wit is better than might. I'll come around to you in the morning for those nine hens and that rooster. Let them be nice fat ones! And do you be at home, or you'll be sorry for it!"

The farmer loaded the bear on his wagon and turned joyfully homeward. There he ate a hearty supper, went to bed and slept soundly, and felt little fear of the fox; for he had learned from this animal that wit is better than might.

Very early the next morning, when the farmer had scarcely opened his eyes, the fox knocked at

the door and demanded the hens and the rooster.

"Right away, Brother Fox, right away! Just give me time to dress," called out the farmer.

He dressed hastily, but instead of opening the door he stood still and began to bark loudly.

"Hullo, Farmer, what's that? That isn't a hound, is it?" cried the fox, anxiously.

"Yes, indeed, Brother Fox, that's a hound. In fact, there are two of them. They slept here under the bed; but how they got here is more than I know. They have scented you and are trying to rush out. I can hardly hold them."

"Oh, hold them, I pray you, until I can get out of this!" cried the terrified fox. "Never mind the hens nor the rooster; you may keep them."

When the farmer opened the door, the fox was already disappearing over the peak of a high mountain. The farmer laughed heartily, and, if he's not dead, perhaps he's laughing still.

—*A Hungarian Folk Story, adapted.*

FLOWER LULLABY

All of the flowers are going to bed,
Daisies are nodding their pretty white heads,
Clovers have softly just whispered, "Good night,"
Soon Mother Nature will tuck them up tight.
"Lullaby, lullaby," now the winds sigh,
"Mother will watch you while winter is nigh;"
Over them softly she spreads a white sheet,
"Lullaby, lullaby, sleep, babies, sleep."

Softly, so softly, she's calling them all;
"Hasten, O bluebells, or night shades will fall;

Buttercups, buttercups, come to your rest,
Little forget-me-not is all undressed.
Maples are taking off dresses of green,
And in bright dressing gowns now can be seen;
Oak trees are going more slowly to bed,
With pretty nightcaps of dark brown and red."

—Addie Litchfield.

THE BATTLE OF THE BEASTS

There was once upon a time a man and his wife who had an old cat and an old dog. One day the man, whose name was Simon, said to his wife, whose name was Susan: "Why should we keep our old cat any longer? She never catches any mice nowadays, and is so useless that I have made up my mind to drown her."

But his wife replied, "Don't do that, for I'm sure she could still catch mice."

"Rubbish," said Simon. "The mice might dance on her and she would never catch one.

I've quite made up my mind that the next time I see her, I shall put her in the water."

Susan was very unhappy when she heard this, and so was the cat, who had been listening

behind the stove. When Simon went off to his work, the poor cat meowed so pitifully, that the woman quickly opened the door and said, "Fly for your life, my poor little beast, and get well away from here before your master returns."

The cat ran into the wood as fast as her old

legs would carry her, and when Simon came home, his wife told him that the cat had vanished.

"So much the better for her," said Simon. "And now we have got rid of her, we must dispose of the old dog. He is quite deaf and blind. and always barks when there is no need, and makes no sound when there is. I think the best thing I can do with him is to hang him."

But the soft-hearted Susan replied, "Please don't; he's surely not so useless as all that."

"Don't be foolish," said her husband. "The courtyard might be full of thieves and he'd never discover it. No, the first time I see him, it's all up with him, I can tell you."

Susan was very unhappy at his words, and so was the dog, who was lying in the corner of the room and had heard everything. As soon as Simon had gone to his work, he stood up and howled so touchingly that Susan quickly opened the door, and said, "Fly for your life, poor beast,

before your master gets home." The dog ran into the wood with his tail between his legs.

When her husband returned, his wife told him that the dog had disappeared.

"That's lucky for him," said Simon, but Susan sighed, for she had been fond of the poor dog.

Now it happened that the cat and dog met on their travels, and though they had not been the best of friends at home, they were quite glad

to meet among strangers. They sat down under a holly tree and poured forth their woes.

Presently a fox passed by, and seeing the pair sitting together, he asked them why they sat there, and what they were grumbling about.

The cat replied, "I have caught many a mouse in my day, but now that I am old and past work, my master wants to drown me."

And the dog said, "Many a night have I watched and guarded my master's house, and now that I am old and deaf, he will hang me."

The fox answered: "That's the way of the world. But I'll help you to get back into your master's favor, only you must first help me in my own troubles."

They promised to do their best, and the fox said, "The wolf has declared war against me, and is at this moment marching to meet me in company with the bear and the wild boar; to-morrow there will be a fierce battle between us."

"All right," said the dog and the cat; "we will stand by you; if we are killed, it is better to die on the field of battle than to perish ignobly at home," and they shook paws and concluded the bargain. The fox sent word to the wolf to meet him at a certain place, and the three set forth to encounter the wolf, the bear, and the boar.

The wolf and his friends arrived on the spot first. When they had waited some time for the fox, the dog, and the cat, the bear said, "I'll climb up that tree, and look if I can see them coming."

The first time he looked round he said, "I can see nothing," and the second time he said, "I can still see nothing." But the third time he said, "I see a mighty army in the distance; one of the warriors has the biggest lance you ever saw!"

This was the cat, who was marching along with her tail erect.

And so they laughed and jeered, and it was so hot that the bear said, "The enemy won't be here

at this rate for hours to come, so I'll just curl up in the fork of the tree and have a little sleep."

And the wolf lay down under the oak, and the wild boar buried himself in some straw, so that nothing was seen of him but one ear.

And while they were lying there, the fox, the cat, and the dog arrived. When the cat saw the wild boar's ear, she pounced upon it, thinking it was a mouse in the straw.

The wild boar got up in a dreadful fright, gave one loud grunt, and disappeared into the wood. But the cat was even more startled than the boar, and, spitting with terror, she scrambled up into the fork of the tree, and, as it happened, right into the bear's face. Now it was the bear's turn to be alarmed, and with a mighty growl he jumped down from the oak and fell right on the top of the wolf and killed him as dead as a stone.

On their way home from the war the fox caught a score of mice, and when they reached

Simon's cottage, he put them all under the stove and said to the cat, "Go and fetch one mouse after the other, and lay them before your master."

"All right," said the cat; and she did it.

When Susan saw this, she said to her husband,

"Just look; here is our old cat back again, and see what a lot of mice she has caught."

"Wonders will never cease," cried Simon. "I thought she would never catch another mouse."

But Susan answered, "There, you see, I always

said our cat was a most excellent creature — but you men always think you know best."

In the meantime the fox said to the dog, "Our friend Simon has just killed a pig; when it gets a little darker, you must go into the court-yard and bark with all your might."

"All right," said the dog, and as soon as it grew dusk he began to bark loudly.

Susan, who heard him first, said to her husband, "Our dog must have come back, for I hear him barking. Do go out and see what's the matter; perhaps thieves are stealing our sausages."

But Simon answered, "The foolish brute is as deaf as a post and is always barking at nothing," and he refused to get up.

The next morning when Susan went to her larder, she found all the sausages gone, and a great hole in the floor. She called out to her husband: "I was perfectly right. Thieves have been here last night, and they have not left a

single sausage. Oh!' if you had only got up when I asked you to!"

Then Simon scratched his head and said, "I can't understand it at all. I certainly never believed the old dog was so quick at hearing."

But Susan replied: "I always told you our old dog was the best dog in the world — but as usual you thought you knew so much better. Men are the same all the world over."

And the fox scored a point too, for he had carried away the sausages himself!

— Grimm.

The
FAIRY-TALE
Princess

THE PRINCESS WHOM NOBODY COULD SILENCE

There was once upon a time a king, and he had a daughter who would always have the last word; no one could silence her.

The king became angry and made this promise: "Whoever can outwit the princess shall have her in marriage, and half the kingdom besides," said he.

There were plenty of those who wanted to try, I can assure you; for it isn't every day that a princess and half a kingdom are to be had so easily.

The gate to the palace hardly ever stood still. The suitors came in swarms and flocks from east and west, both riding and walking. But there was no one who could silence the princess. At last the king announced that those who tried and did not succeed should be branded on both ears with a large iron; he would not have all this running about the palace for nothing.

Now there were three brothers who had heard about the princess, and as they were rather badly off at home, they thought they would try their luck to see if they could win the princess and half the kingdom. They were good friends and so they agreed to set out together.

When they had got a bit on the way, Ashiepattle found a dead magpie.

"I have found something! I have found something!" cried he.

"What have you found?" asked the brothers.

"I have found a dead magpie," said he.

"Faugh! throw it away; what can you do with that?" said the other two, who always believed they were the wisest.

"Oh, I've nothing else to do. I can easily carry it," said Ashiepattle.

When they had gone on a bit farther, Ashiepattle found an old willow twig, which he picked up.

"I have found something! I have found something!" he cried.

"What have you found now?" said the brothers.

"I have found a willow twig," said he.

"Pooh! what are you going to do with that? Throw it away," said the two.

"I have nothing else to do. I can easily carry it with me," said Ashiepattle.

When they had gone still farther, he found a broken saucer, which he also picked up.

"Here, lads, I have found something! I have found something!" said he.

"Pshaw! Is it worth while dragging that along, too? Throw it away!" said the brothers.

"Oh, I've nothing else to do. I can easily carry it with me," said Ashiepattle.

When they had gone a little bit farther, he found a crooked goat horn, and soon after he found the fellow to it.

"I have found something! I have found something, lads!" said he.

"What have you found now?" said the others.

"Two goat horns," answered Ashiepattle.

"Ugh! Throw them away! What are you going to do with them?" said they.

"Oh, I have nothing else to do. I can easily carry them with me," said Ashiepattle.

In a little while he found a wedge.

"I say, lads, I have found something! I have found something!" he cried.

"You are forever finding something! What have you found now?" asked the eldest two.

"I have found a wedge," he answered.

"Oh, throw it away! What are you going to do with it?" said they.

"Oh, I have nothing else to do. I can easily carry it with me," said Ashiepattle.

As he went across the king's field, which had just been plowed, he stooped down and took up an old boot sole.

"Hullo, lads! I have found something! I have found something!" said he.

"Heaven grant you may find a little sense before you get to the palace!" said the two. "What is it you have found now?"

"An old boot sole," said he.

"Throw it away! What are you going to do with it?" said the brothers.

"Oh, I can easily carry it with me, and who knows? — it may help me to win the princess and half the kingdom," said Ashiepattle.

"You win the princess!" said the other two. So they went in to the princess, the eldest first.

"Good day!" said he.

"Good day to you!" answered she, with a shrug.

"It's terribly hot here," said he.

"It's hotter in the fire," said the princess. The branding iron was lying waiting in the fire.

When he saw this, he was struck speechless, and so it was all over with him.

The second brother fared no better.

"Good day!" said he.

"Good day to you!" said she, with a wriggle.

"It's terribly hot here!" said he.

"It's hotter in the fire," said she. With that he lost both speech and wits, and so the iron had to be brought out.

Then came Ashiepattle's turn.

"Good day!" said he.

"Good day to you!" said she, with a shrug and a wriggle.

"It's nice and warm here!" said Ashiepattle.

"It's warmer in the fire," she answered. She was in no better humor now she saw the third suitor.

"Then there's a chance for me to roast my magpie on it," said he, bringing it out.

"I'm afraid it will sputter," said the princess.

"No fear of that! I'll tie this willow twig round it," said the lad.

"You can't tie it tight enough," said she.

"Then I'll drive in a wedge," said the lad, and he brought out the wedge.

"The fat will be running off it."

"Then I'll hold this under it," said the lad, and showed her the broken saucer.

"You are so crooked in your speech."

"No, I'm not crooked," answered the lad, "but this is crooked;" and he brought out one of the goat horns.

"Well, I've never seen the like!"

"Here you see the like," said he, and brought out the other horn.

"It seems you have come here to wear out my soul!" she said.

"No, I have not come here to wear out your soul; I have one here already worn out," answered the lad, and brought out the old boot sole.

The princess was so dumbfounded at this that she was completely silenced.

"Now you are mine!" said Ashiepattle, and so he got her and half the kingdom.

— *A Norwegian Fairy Tale.*

PUSSY WILLOWS

The brook is brimmed with melting snow,
  The maple sap is running,
And on the highest elm, a crow
  His coal-black wings is sunning.
A close, green bud the Mayflower lies
  Upon its mossy pillow;
And sweet and low the south wind blows,
And through the brown fields calling goes,
  "Come, Pussy! Pussy Willow!"

Soon red will bud the maple trees,
The bluebirds will be singing,
The yellow tassels in the breeze
Be from the poplars swinging.
And rosy will the Mayflower be
Upon its mossy pillow,
But you must come the first of all—
"Come, Pussy!" is the South Wind's call,
"Come, Pussy! Pussy Willow!
Within your close, brown wrapper stir,
Come out and show your silver fur,
Come, Pussy! Pussy Willow!"

THE STORY WITHOUT AN END

Part I

There was once a king who was very fond of stories. He lived a long time ago before there were any story-books.

So this king had people tell him stories. He could never hear enough. He would listen to his story-tellers from morning until night.

The king was always sorry when a story came to an end. Another must be begun at once. But sometimes no one was ready with a new story. Then the king became very angry.

At last he said: "Whoever will tell me a story that has no ending shall marry my daughter. And he shall be king after me. But whoever starts a story and ends it, him will I throw into prison. And there he shall stay."

Now the princess was very beautiful, and the kingdom was rich. So young princes and noblemen came from far and near with their stories.

The first one to come began his tale. He talked all day. The second and the third day he talked on and on. But the fourth day he could think of no more. He stammered and stopped.

"Is that all?" asked the king. "Go on."

But the young man could not say another word.

"Away with him to the prison," cried the king. "Next!"

Another began a story without a moment's delay. He talked and he talked day after day, and week after week. But at last he, too, could say no more. And he was hurried away to prison.

This one was followed by a third. The third was followed by a fourth. And these were followed by many others. Some talked for weeks, some talked for months. But all came to an end at last, and were thrown into prison.

So for a long time the story-loving king was quite happy. Though each story-teller had stopped at last, another was always ready to begin a new tale. Each one was sure he would win the princess and the kingdom. No one seemed to give a thought to the prison.

But there came a day when no one appeared as the king cried, "Next!"

The king waited a whole day, two days, three days, a week. No one came with a story.

The king was getting impatient. He must

have a story. At last he was about to free his prisoners and give each another chance, when a young man appeared before him. He was not a prince; he was not a nobleman. He was the son of a poor workman who lived near the palace.

"Well, what do you want?" asked the king, who knew the young man.

"I came to tell you a story," was the reply, — "a story without an end."

"Indeed," sneered the king, "do you think you can do what a score of princes and noblemen have tried and given up?"

"I am ready to try," answered the young man.

"Begin, then, at once," said the king. "Only remember, when you stop, to prison you go."

"I have one favor to ask," said the youth.

"What is it?" asked the king, impatiently.

"Do you promise to listen to the end?"

"Yes, yes," cried the king; "only begin!"

The young man began.

Part II

"There was once a king who built a barn. It was the largest barn ever seen. It took hours to walk from one side of it to the other. It took weeks to walk the length of it.

"Then this king had all his people sow all his lands with wheat. For miles, and miles, and miles, there was nothing but wheat, wheat, wheat.

"When the grain was ripe, the king had it all gathered into his great barn.

"But the barn was not full.

"The next year all the king's people sowed wheat. And when the wheat was ripe, it was all gathered into the king's barn.

"Still the barn was not full.

"Year after year all the king's people sowed wheat. And all the ripe grain was gathered into this great barn.

"At last the king died,—but still his barn was not full.

"The king's son became king, and he made all the people sow wheat. And all the ripe grain was gathered into the king's great barn.

"After many years the son died, and still the barn was not full.

"So one king followed another. And every one made all the people sow wheat. And all the ripe grain was gathered into the king's barn.

"At last, in the reign of the tenth king the great barn was filled full!

"Then the king had every door and every window closed tight.

"'Never before was there such a pile of wheat in the whole world,' cried the king. 'And it's all mine. And it's all safe. There's not the smallest hole or crack in that barn!'

"But this proud king was wrong. There was just one hole in one corner of the barn. This hole was barely big enough to stick a large pinhead through. But this was enough!

"One day a hungry ant came that way. He found the one hole into the barn. It was just big enough for him to crawl through. He went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"When he came out, another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"And when this ant came out, another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

All day long the story-teller kept on saying, "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

In the morning he began again, "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

"All the ants must have been in and brought out a grain of wheat; on with the story," cried the king.

"No, no," answered the young man, "there was a whole big hill of them."

And he went on as before, "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

So he kept on with the story day after day.

At last the king broke in again. "Surely," he cried, "every one of those ants has been into that barn and brought out a grain of wheat."

"True," answered the young man, "and now they are all going in again, one at a time."

And he went on, "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

Week after week he kept up his story with these words, over and over. "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

At last the weary king interrupted again. "Ants don't live long," said he. "Every one

of that hill of ants must have died long ago."

"True," answered the young man, with a smile, "the first hill of ants are all dead. It is their children that are going into the barn now. And after these have carried off grain all their lives, their children will take their places, and so on. Then another ant went—"

"Hold," cried the king, "leave that out, and go on with the story."

"No, king," answered the young man, "that is a part of my story. I cannot omit it. And you have promised to listen to me."

So he went on again, "Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat.

"Then another ant went in and brought out a grain of wheat."

And the king listened, month after month.

Finally he could bear it no longer.

"Stop!" he cried. "Not another word! Take

my daughter, take my kingdom, take everything I have! But never say *ant* or *wheat* to me again!"

So the young man was forced to end his story. The first thing he did was to set free the prisoners, — the princes and noblemen who could not tell a story without an end. Then he married the beautiful princess. But he would not take the kingdom until the king died.

SIR ROBIN

Rollicking Robin is here again.
What does he care for the April rain?

Care for it? Glad of it. Doesn't he know
That the April rain carries off the snow,
And coaxes out leaves to shadow his nest,
And washes his pretty, red Easter vest,
And makes the juice of the cherry sweet,
For his hungry little robins to eat?
"Ha! ha! ha!" hear the jolly bird laugh!
That isn't the best of the story, by half!

Robin, Sir Robin, gay, red-vested knight,
Now you have come to us, summer's in sight.
You never dreamed of the wonders you bring, —
Visions that follow the flash of your wing.
How all the beautiful by and by
Around you and after you seems to fly!
Sing on or eat on, as pleases your mind!
Well have you earned every morsel you find.
"Ay! Ha! ha! ha!" whistles robin. "My dear,
Let us all take our own choice of good cheer!"

FOOL'S LUCK

A poor man had three sons. Two of them were very clever, but the youngest was thought to be rather foolish. When the father died, he left his sons one ox. The sons agreed that each of them should build a stable and that the ox should belong to the one whose stable he first entered.

The two older brothers built beautiful stables, quite good enough for a person to live in. But the youngest brother built only a little rough shed.

"The ox will surely go into one of our stables," said the older brothers. "They are so fine; our foolish brother's stable isn't fit for a pig to live in."

But when the ox was let loose, he passed by the two fine stables and, much to the disgust of the two clever brothers, walked straight into the stable of the youngest brother.

"Now," said he, "I will take this ox to the fair and sell him. With the money I get, I will travel all over the world and have a fine time."

So saying, he tied a rope around the ox's horns and started off for the fair. As he was plodding along, a dreadful storm arose. The wind blew fiercely and set the branches of an old willow tree swaying and creaking. The foolish fellow thought the tree was speaking to him.

"What was that you said? Do you want to buy my ox, Willow Tree?" he asked.

The old tree creaked louder than ever.

"I don't quite understand you," said the foolish one, "but I think you want me to tie the ox. Is that what you want?"

Again the old tree creaked.

"Yes, I am sure that is what you mean," and he tied the ox to the tree. "Now where is my money?" he asked.

Once more the old tree creaked in the wind.

"Oh, you haven't any money to-day? Well, never mind, I will come for it next week." So saying, the youngest brother returned to his home.

"Have you sold the ox?" asked one brother.

"I am sure you made a bad bargain," said the other.

"Yes, I sold the ox and I made a very good bargain," was the answer.

"For how much and to whom did you sell it?"

"For forty gold dollars; I sold the ox to an old willow tree."

"Let us see the money," said his brothers.

"I cannot do that. The willow did not have the money to-day, but will pay me next week."

"Ha! ha! ha! You will never get that money as long as you live. How foolish you are!"

But in spite of their teasing, the foolish fellow was sure he would get his money. So the next week he again went to the old willow tree.

"I have come for my money, Mister Willow."

But as there was no wind that day the willow made no answer.

"Don't you mean to pay me?" he shouted

angrily. "Do you think that is fair or just? I gave you my fine ox and you give me nothing."

But not a branch of the willow tree creaked.

This continued silence made the foolish fellow furious. He rushed at the innocent tree and struck the roots a few mighty blows with his sharp ax. Then he seized the branches and pulled with might and main. The old tree swayed and groaned and finally yielded slowly to the giant strength of the enraged man. It measured its length by the roadside, its roots turned high up in the air.

"There, lie there, you old thief!" panted the man, as he walked to the upturned roots to pick up his ax.

But as he stooped, what do you think he saw right under where the tree trunk had just stood? A great pot of shining gold pieces!

"Ah, ha!" he cried, "I'll take my forty dollars out of that, and put the rest out at interest."

Then, hanging the pot on his ax handle and throwing his burden over his shoulder, the foolish brother set off proudly for home.

When his clever brothers saw the gold, they were astonished.

"How much better we could spend this gold than that foolish fellow," they said between themselves.

"Let us throw him into the river to-night," said one of them; "then the gold will be ours."

But the youngest brother had very good ears. He heard all his older brothers said. So at night when it was dark and his brothers were asleep, he took his bag of gold and hurried off to the king to make complaint against his wicked brothers.

Next day he told the king the whole story, just as I have told it to you. The king's daughter, a beautiful princess, chanced to be sitting beside her father. When she heard the story and looked at the foolish fellow, she burst out laughing. And

she laughed and laughed and laughed; it seemed as though she could never stop! Whereupon all the people at court cried out: "See, the princess laughs! The princess laughs!"

Then the king called the young man to him.

"My friend," he said, "for many years my daughter has been very sad. Nothing could make her smile even. So I have said that the man who first caused her to laugh should marry her and have half my kingdom. You have done this, and my promise shall be kept. But your wicked brothers shall be hanged."

Then the younger brother begged the king to spare his brothers' lives and let them come to court and live as servants. The king granted his request and the foolish brother married the beautiful princess, and reigned over half the kingdom.

— *A Hungarian Folk Story, adapted.*

THE SWALLOW

Fly away, fly away, over the sea,
Sun-loving swallow, for summer is done.
Come again, come again, come back to me,
Bringing the summer, and bringing the sun.

When you come hurrying home o'er the sea,
Then we are certain that winter is past;
Cloudy and cold though your pathway may be,
Summer and sunshine will follow you fast.

— Christina Rossetti.

THE FLYING TRUNK

There was once a merchant who was so rich that he could pave the whole street with gold and have almost enough left for a little lane. But he did not do that. When he spent a shilling he got back a crown, such a clever merchant was he; and this continued till he died.

His son now got all this money; and he lived merrily, going to balls every evening, making kites out of dollar notes, and playing at ducks and drakes on the seacoast with gold pieces instead of pebbles. In this way the money might soon be spent, and indeed it was so. At last he had no more than four shillings left, and no clothes to wear but a pair of slippers and an old dressing

gown. Now his friends did not trouble themselves any more about him, as they could not walk with

him in the street, but one of them, who was good-natured, sent him an old trunk, with the remark,

"Pack up!" Yes, that was all very well, but he had nothing to pack, therefore he seated himself in the trunk.

That was a wonderful trunk. As soon as any one pressed the lock, the trunk could fly. He pressed it, and whir! away flew the trunk with him through the chimney and over the clouds, farther and farther away. But as often as the bottom of the trunk cracked a little he was in great fear lest it might go to pieces. Then he would have flung a fine somersault!

In that way he came to the land of the Turks. He hid the trunk in a wood under some dry leaves, and then went into the town. He could do that very well, for among the Turks all the people went dressed like himself in dressing gown and slippers. Soon he met a nurse with a little child.

"Here, you Turkish nurse," he began, "what kind of a great castle is that close by the town, in which the windows are so high up?"

"There dwells the Sultan's daughter," replied she. "It is prophesied that she will be very unhappy respecting a lover; and therefore nobody may go to her unless the Sultan and Sultana are there, too."

"Thank you!" said the merchant's son; and he went out into the forest, seated himself in his trunk, flew on the roof and crept through the window into the Princess's room.

She was lying asleep on the sofa, and she was so beautiful that the merchant's son was compelled to kiss her. She awoke, and was very much startled; but he said he was a Turkish angel, who had come down to her through the air, and that pleased her.

They sat down side by side, and he told her many fine stories which interested her very much. Then he asked her if she would marry him, and she said, "Yes," directly.

"But you must come here on Saturday," said

she. "Then the Sultan and Sultana will be here to tea. They will be very proud that I am to marry a Turkish angel. But take care that you know a pretty story, for both my parents are very fond indeed of stories. My mother likes them high-flown and moral, but my father likes them merry, so that one can laugh."

"Yes, I shall bring no marriage gift but a story," said he; and so they parted. But the Princess gave him a saber, the sheath embroidered with gold pieces, and that was very useful to him.

Now he flew away, bought a new dressing gown and sat in the forest, and made up a story; it was to be ready by Saturday, and that was not an easy thing.

By the time he had finished it Saturday had come. The Sultan and his wife and all the Court were at the Princess's to tea. He was received very graciously.

"Will you relate us a story," said the Sultana, "one that is deep and moral?"

"But one we can laugh at," said the Sultan.

Certainly," he replied, and began.

"There was once a bundle of Matches, and these Matches were very proud of their high descent. The great fir tree of which each of them

was a little splinter, had been a great old tree out in the forest. The Matches now lay between a Tinder Box and an old Iron Pot, and they were telling about the days of their youth. 'Yes, when we were upon the green boughs,' they said, 'then we really were upon the green boughs! Every morning and evening there was diamond tea for us (meaning dew); we had sunshine all day long whenever the sun shone, and all the little birds had to tell stories. We could see very well that we were rich, for the other trees were only dressed out in summer, while our family had the means to wear green dresses in the winter as well. But then the woodcutter came, and our family was broken up. The head of the family got an appointment as mainmast in a first-rate ship, which could sail round the world if necessary; the other branches went to other places, and now we have the office of kindling a light. That's how we grand people came to be in the kitchen.'

"'My fate was of a different kind,' said the Iron Pot, which stood next to the Matches. 'From the beginning, ever since I came into the world, there has been a great deal of scouring and cooking done in me. I look after the practical part, and am the first here in the house. My only pleasure is to sit in my place after dinner, very clean and neat, and to carry on a sensible conversation with my comrades. But except the Water Pot, which sometimes is taken down into the courtyard, we always live within our four walls.'

"'Now you are talking too much,' the Tinder Box interrupted, and the steel struck against the flints, so that sparks flew out. 'Shall we not have a merry evening?'

"'Yes, let us talk about who is the grandest,' said the Matches.

"'No, I don't like to talk about myself,' retorted the Pot. 'Let us get up an evening entertain-

ment. I will begin. I will tell a story from real life. On the Baltic, by the Danish shore —'

"'That's a pretty beginning!' cried all the Plates. 'That will be a story we shall like.'

"'Yes, it happened to me in my youth, when I lived in a quiet family where the furniture was polished, and the floors scoured, and new curtains were put up every fortnight.'

"'What an interesting way you have of telling a story!' said the Carpet Broom. 'One can tell directly that a man is speaking who has been in woman's society. There's something pure runs through it.'

"And the Pot went on telling his story, and the end was as good as the beginning.

"The Plates rattled with joy; the Carpet Broom brought green parsley out of the dust hole, and put it like a wreath on the Pot, for he knew that it would vex the others. 'If I crown him to-day,' it thought, 'he will crown me to-morrow.'

"'Now I'll dance,' said the Fire Tongs, and they danced. Preserve us! how that implement could lift one leg! The old Chair Cushion burst to see it. 'Shall I be crowned, too?' thought the Tongs; and indeed a wreath was awarded.

"'They're only common people, after all!' thought the Matches.

"Now the Tea Urn was to sing; but she said she had taken cold and could not sing unless she felt boiling within. But the truth was she did not want to sing, except when she was in the parlor with the grand people.

"In the window sat an old Quill Pen, with which the maid generally wrote. There was nothing remarkable about this pen, except that it had been dipped too deep into the ink, but she was proud of that. 'If the Tea Urn won't sing,' she said, 'she may leave it alone. Outside hangs a nightingale in a cage, and he can sing. He hasn't any education, but this evening we'll say nothing about that.'

"'I think it very wrong,' said the Tea Kettle — he was the kitchen singer, and half-brother to the Tea Urn — 'that that rich and foreign bird should be listened to. Is that patriotic? Let the Market Basket decide.'

"'I am vexed,' said the Market Basket. 'No one can imagine how much I am secretly vexed. Is that a proper way of spending the evening? Would it not be more sensible to put the house in order? Let each one go to his own place, and I would arrange the whole game.'

"'Yes, let us make a disturbance,' cried they all. Then the door opened, and the maid came in, and they all stood still; not one stirred. But there was not one pot among them who did not know what he could do, and how grand he was. 'Yes, if I had liked,' each one thought, 'it might have been a very merry evening.'

"The servant girl took the matches and lighted the fire with them. Mercy! how they sputtered and burst into flame! 'Now every one can see,' thought they, 'that we are the first. How we shine! what a light!'—and they burned out."

"That was a capital story," said the Sultana. "I feel myself quite carried away to the kitchen and the Matches. Yes, now thou shalt marry our daughter."

"Yes, certainly," said the Sultan; "thou shalt marry our daughter on Monday."

And they called him "thou" because he was to belong to the family.

The wedding was decided on, and on the evening before it the whole city was illuminated. Biscuits and cakes were thrown among the people; the street boys stood upon their toes, called out "Hurrah!" and whistled on their fingers. It was uncommonly splendid.

"Yes, I shall have to give something as a treat," thought the merchant's son. So he bought rockets and crackers, and every imaginable sort of firework, put them all into his trunk, and flew up into the air.

"Crack!" how they went, and how they went off! All the Turks hopped up with such a start that their slippers flew about their ears; such a meteor they had never seen. Now they could understand that it must be a Turkish angel who was going to marry the Princess.

What stories people tell! Every one whom he asked about it had seen it in a different way; but one and all thought it fine.

"I saw the Turkish angel himself," said one. "He had eyes like glowing stars, and a beard like foaming water."

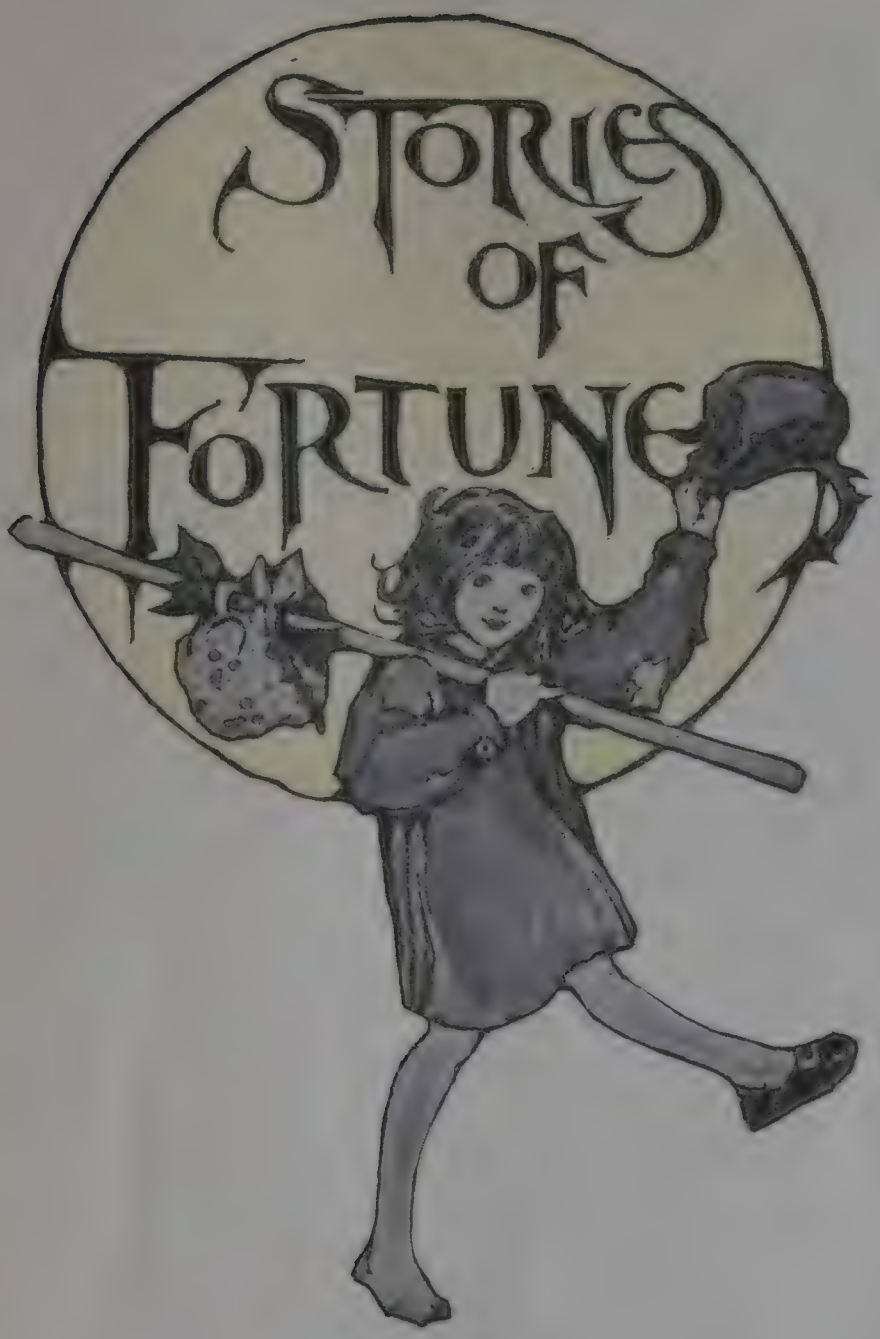
"He flew in a fiery mantle," said another; "the most lovely little cherub peeped forth from among the folds."

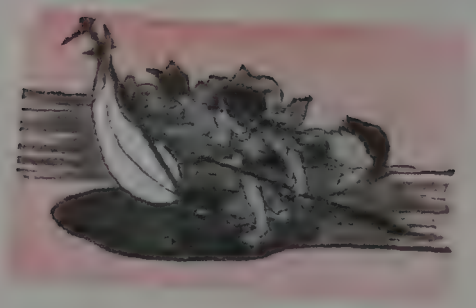
Yes, they were wonderful things that he heard; and on the following day he was to be married.

Now he went back to the forest to rest himself in his trunk. But what had become of that? A spark from the fireworks had set fire to it, and the trunk was burned to ashes. He could not fly any more, and could not get to his bride.

She stood all day on the roof waiting; and most likely she is waiting still. But he wanders through the world telling fairy tales; but they are not so merry as that one he told about the matches.

— Andersen.


STORIES
OF
FORTUNE



THE WORLD'S REWARD

There was once a man who went into the wood to cut trees. He came to a rocky place, where he heard groans and moans. So he went to see who it was that wanted help. He found that the groans came from under a big slab among the bowlders.

"Lift the slab! Let me out!" sounded faintly from the rocks.

But the slab was so heavy that it would take many men to lift it. So the man cut down a tree, which he used as a lever. With this he pried up the slab. From under it there crawled a terrible dragon.

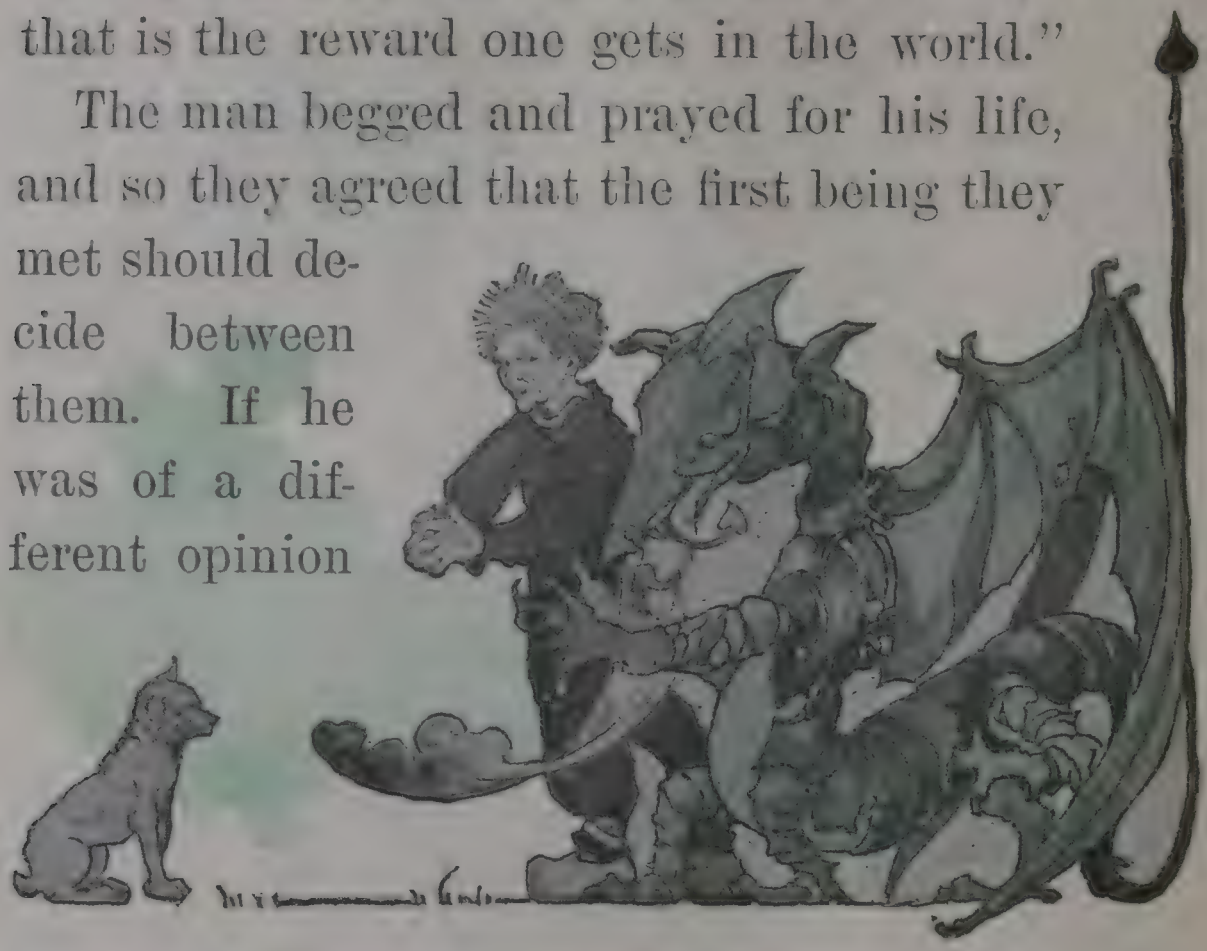
"Ha, food!" roared the dragon, rushing upon the man.

"Hold!" cried the man. "Do not eat me, you ungrateful monster. I have just saved your life."

"Maybe!" said the dragon. "But you can easily understand that I am hungry, having lain

there a hundred years and tasted no food; beside, that is the reward one gets in the world."

The man begged and prayed for his life, and so they agreed that the first being they met should decide between them. If he was of a different opinion



from the dragon, the man should not lose his life; but if he thought the same as the dragon, the dragon should eat the man.

The first being they met was an old dog, who was walking along the road under the hillside. They spoke to him and asked him to be their judge.

"Goodness only knows! I have served my master faithfully since I was a pup," said the dog; "I have watched many a night and many a time while he has been sound asleep, and I have saved the house and things from fire and thieves more than once; but now, when I can neither see nor hear any longer, he wants to shoot me; so I ran away, and I knock about from place to place, sniffing and begging my way till one day I shall die of hunger. No, that is the reward one gets in this world," said the dog.

"Now I'll eat you!" said the dragon, and was going to swallow the man; but the man spoke so well for himself, and begged so hard for his life, that the dragon agreed that the next being they met should decide between them.

An old horse then came dragging himself along the road just under the hillside. They spoke to him, and asked him to judge between them. Yes, that he would.

"Well, I have served my master as long as I was able to draw and carry," said the horse. "I have slaved and worked for him till the sweat streamed from every hair, and I have worked faithfully till I have become stiff and worn out with work and age; now I am fit for nothing, and am not worth my keep, and so I am to have a bullet, says my master. No, that is the reward one gets in this world," said the horse.

"Now I'll eat you!" said the dragon, and the monster opened its jaws wide to swallow the man. He again begged and prayed hard for his life, but the dragon said he was so hungry that he could not wait any longer.

"Look, there is some one coming, just as if he were sent to be our judge," said the man, as Reynard came slinking toward them between the bowlders. "Good things come in threes," said the man; "let us ask him also, and if he judges like the others, you shall eat me on the spot."

"Very well," said the dragon. He had also heard that all good things came in threes, and so he would agree to that. The man spoke to the fox as he had done to the others.

"Yes," said the fox; but he took the man aside.

"What will you give me, if I free you from the dragon?" he whispered in the man's ear.

"You shall come home with me and be lord and master over my fowls and geese every Thursday night," said the man.

"This is a case that can be settled only on the spot itself, my dear dragon," said the fox. "I cannot get into my head how such a mighty animal as yourself could find room under that slab."

"Well, I was lying up here sunning myself," said the dragon, "when an avalanche came down the mountain and turned the slab over me."

"That is very possible," said Reynard; "but I cannot understand it, nor will I believe it, till I see it," said he.

So the man said they had better try it, and the dragon slipped into the hole again, and just at that moment the man pulled away the lever, and the slab shut down the dragon again with a bang.

"You may now lie there till doomsday," said the fox, "since you had no pity on the man who saved you." The dragon yelled and groaned and prayed, but the other two went their way.

The next Thursday evening the fox set out for the farm to help himself from the hen-roost, and hid himself behind a heap of poles, which were standing there. When the girl went to give the fowls their food, Reynard sneaked in, so that she did not notice him; and no sooner was she gone than he killed enough for eight days, and ate till he could not move. When the girl came back in the morning, the fox lay sleeping and snoring in the morning sunshine, with all his four legs stretched out; he was as sleek and round as a big sausage.

The girl ran to fetch her mistress, and she and all the others came back with sticks and poles, and began thrashing Reynard till they almost killed him; but at last when they thought they had done for him, Reynard found a hole in the floor, through which he slipped out and set off limping toward the wood.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" said Reynard; "but I suppose that is the reward one gets in this world!"

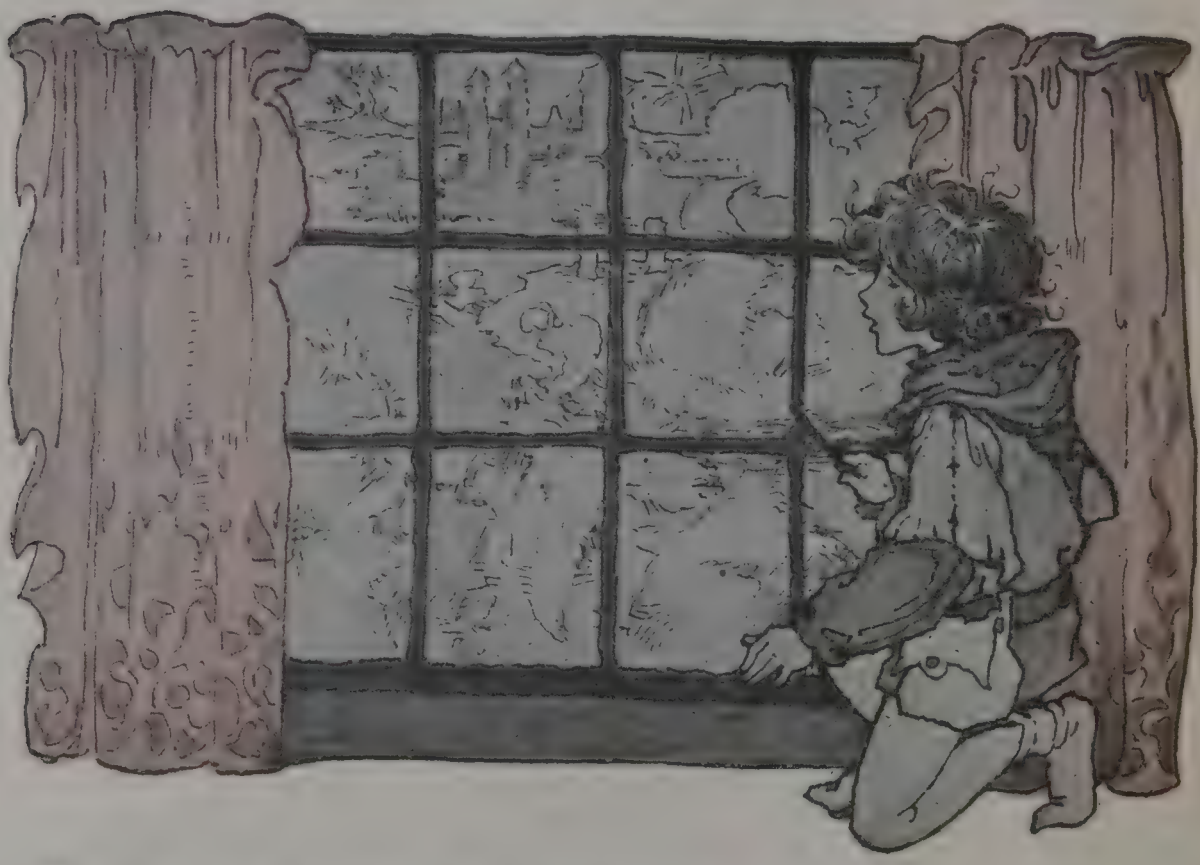
—*A Norwegian Fairy Tale.*

JACK FROST

The door was shut, as doors should be,
Before you went to bed last night;
Yet Jack Frost had got in, you see,
And left your window silver white.

He must have waited till you slept;
And not a single word he spoke,
But penciled o'er the panes and crept
Away again before you woke.

And now you cannot see the hills
Nor fields that stretch beyond the lane;
But there are fairer things than these
His fingers traced on every pane.



Rocks and castles towering high;
Hills and dales and streams and fields;
And knights in armor riding by,
With nodding plumes and shining shields.

And here are little boats, and there
  Big ships with sails spread to the breeze;
And yonder, palm trees waving fair
  On islands set in silver seas.

And butterflies with gauzy wings;
  And herds of cows and flocks of sheep;
And fruit and flowers and all the things
  You see when you are sound asleep.

For creeping softly underneath
  The door when all the lights are out,
Jack Frost takes every breath you breathe,
  And knows the things you think about.

He paints them on the window pane
  In fairy lines with frozen steam;
And when you wake you see again
  The lovely things you saw in dream.

— Gabriel Setoun.

THE STRAW OX

There was once upon a time an old man and an old woman. The old man worked in the fields as a pitch burner, while the old woman sat at home and spun flax. They were so poor that they could save nothing at all; all their earnings went for bare food, and when that was gone there was nothing left. At last the old woman had a good idea.

"Look now, husband," cried she, "make me a straw ox, and smear it all over with tar."

"Why, you foolish woman!" said he, "what's the good of an ox of that sort?"

"Never mind," said she, "you just make it. I know what I am about."

What was the poor man to do? He set to work and made the ox of straw, and smeared it all over with tar.

The night passed away, and at early dawn the old woman took her distaff, and drove the straw ox out into the steppe to graze, and she herself

sat down behind a hillock, and began spinning her flax, and cried: —

"Graze away, little ox, while I spin my flax!
Graze away, little ox, while I spin my flax!"
And while she spun, her head drooped down and

she began to doze, and while she was dozing, from behind the dark wood and from the back of the huge pines, a bear came rushing out upon the ox.

"Who are you? Speak and tell me!" said the bear.

"A three-year-old heifer am I, made of straw and smeared with tar," replied the ox.

"Oh!" said the bear, "stuffed with straw and trimmed with tar, are you? Then give me of your straw and tar, that I may patch up my ragged fur again!"

"Take some," said the ox, and the bear fell upon him and began to tear away at the tar.

He tore and tore, and buried his teeth in the straw ox till he found he couldn't let go again. He tugged and he tugged, but it was no use, and the ox dragged him gradually off — goodness knows where. Then the old woman awoke, and there was no ox to be seen.

"Alas! stupid creature that I am!" cried she, "perchance it has gone home."

Then she caught up distaff and spinning board, threw them over her shoulders, and hastened home. She saw that the ox had dragged the bear up to the fence, and in she went to her husband.

"Man, man!" she cried, "look, look! the ox has brought us a bear. Come out and kill it!"

Then the old man jumped up, tore off the bear, tied him up, and threw him into the cellar.

Next morning, between dark and dawn, the old woman took her distaff and drove the ox into the steppe to graze. She herself sat down by a mound, began spinning, and said: —

"Graze, graze away, little ox, while I spin my flax!
Graze, graze away, little ox, while I spin my flax!"

And while she spun, her head drooped down and she dozed. And, lo! from behind the dark wood, from the back of the huge pines, a gray wolf came rushing out upon the ox.

"Who are you? Come, tell me!" snarled the wolf.

"I am a three-year-old heifer, stuffed with straw and trimmed with tar," said the ox.

"Oh! trimmed with tar, are you? Then give me of your tar to tar my sides, that the dogs and the sons of dogs tear me not!"

"Take some," said the ox. And with that the wolf fell upon him and tried to tear the tar off. He tugged and tugged, and tore with his teeth, but he could get none off. Then he tried to let go, but couldn't; tug and worry as he might it was no use. When the old woman woke, there was no ox in sight.

"Maybe my ox has gone home!" she cried; "I'll go home and see."

When she got there she was astonished, for by the paling stood the ox with the wolf still tugging at it. She ran and told her husband, who came and threw the wolf into the cellar with the bear.

On the third day the old woman again drove her ox into the pastures to graze, and sat down by a mound and dozed off. Then a fox came running up.

"Who are you?" it asked the ox.

"I'm a three-year-old heifer, stuffed with straw and daubed with tar."

"Then give me some of your tar to smear my sides with, when those dogs and sons of dogs tear my hide!"

"Take some," said the ox. Then the fox fastened her teeth in him and couldn't draw them out again. The old woman told her husand, who took and cast the fox into the cellar with the bear and the wolf.

And after that they caught Pussy Swiftfoot, the hare, likewise, and threw her into the cellar with the other animals.

So when he had got them all safe the old man sat down on a bench before the cellar and began sharpening a knife.

"Tell me, daddy, what are you sharpening your knife for?" asked the bear.

"To flay your skin off, that I may make a

leather jacket for myself and a cloak for my wife."

"Oh! don't flay me, daddy dear! Rather let me go, and I'll bring you a lot of honey."

"Very well, see you do it," and he unbound and let the bear go. Then he sat down on the bench and again began sharpening his knife.

"Daddy, what are you sharpening your knife for?" asked the wolf.

"To flay off your skin, that I may make me a warm cap for the winter."

"Oh! don't flay me, daddy dear, and I'll bring you a whole herd of little sheep."

"Well, see that you do it," and he let the wolf go.

Then he sat down and began sharpening his knife again.

"Be so kind, dear daddy, and tell me why you are sharpening your knife," said the fox, putting out her little snout.

"Little foxes," said the old man, "have nice skins that do capitally for collars and trimmings, and I want to skin you!"

"Oh! don't take my skin away, daddy dear, and I will bring you hens and geese."

"Very well, see that you do it," and he let the fox go.

The hare now alone remained, and the old man began sharpening his knife on the hare's account.

"Why do you do that?" asked the hare.

"Little hares have such soft, warm skins. They will make me nice gloves and mittens for the winter!" replied the old man.

"Oh! daddy dear, don't flay me and I'll bring you kale and good cabbage, if only you let me go!"

So he let the hare go also.

Then the old man and his wife went to bed. Very early in the morning, when it was neither

dusk nor dawn, there was a noise in the doorway like "Durrrrrr!"

"Daddy!" cried the old woman, "there's some one scratching at the door; go and see who it is!"

The old man went out, and there was the bear carrying a whole hive full of honey. The old man took the honey from the bear; but no sooner did he lie down than again there was another "Durrrrrr!" at the door. The old man looked out and saw the wolf driving a whole flock of sheep into the courtyard. Close on his heels came the fox, driving before him geese and hens, and all manner of fowls; and last of all came the hare, bringing cabbage and kale, and all manner of good food. And the old man was glad, and the old woman was glad. And the old man sold the sheep and oxen, and got so rich that he needed nothing more. As for the straw-stuffed ox, it stood in the sun till it fell to pieces.

—*A Cossack Fairy Tale.*

MARCH

Bold March! Wild March!
Oh! you saucy fellow!
Even though your voice is rough,
We know your heart is mellow.
Hush! You'll wake the children up,
They are sweetly sleeping,
Daffodil and Buttercup
Still are silence keeping.
Sing, then, low, softly blow,
Whisper sweetly, softly so.

There now. So now.
Listen to the clatter!
Pink Arbutus stirs in bed
And wonders what's the matter.
All the icy fleets set free,
Down the streams are rushing;
Toward the everlasting sea
Wildly, madly pushing.

Up hill, down dale,
  Over moor and mountain;
Shout and sing: "Awake! 'Tis Spring!"
  Burst forth, O laughing fountain!
Bend, tall elms, your graceful heads!
  Swing low, O weeping willows!
Stretch, little blades of grass; for March
  Has come to air your pillows!

—Jane E. Jones.

SPRING HERALDED

Oh! the sunshine told the bluebird
  And the bluebird told the brook,
That the dandelions were peeping
  From the woodland's sheltered nook;
So the brook was blithe and happy,
  And it babbled all the way
As it ran to tell the river
  Of the coming of the May.

Then the river told the meadow
And the meadow told the bee,
That the tender buds were swelling
On the old horse-chestnut tree;
And the bee shook off its torpor,
And it spread each gauzy wing
As it flew to tell the flowers
Of the coming of the spring.

Then each flower told its neighbor
And each neighbor told its friend,
That the stormy days were over
And the winter at an end;
While the blue sky smiled above them
And the birds began to sing—
And the land grew bright with gladness
At the coming of the spring.

THE HARDY TIN SOLDIER

There were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers. They were all brothers, for they had all been born of one old tin spoon. They shouldered their muskets, and looked straight before them. Their uniforms were red and blue, and very splendid. The first thing they had heard in the world, when the lid was taken off their box, had been the words, "Tin soldiers!"

These words were uttered by a little boy, clapping his hands. The soldiers had been given to him on his birthday. Each soldier was exactly like the rest except the one which had been cast last, and there had not been enough tin to finish him; but he stood as firmly upon his one leg as the others on their two; and it was just this soldier who became remarkable.

On the table on which they had been placed stood many other playthings, but the toy that

attracted most attention was a neat castle of cardboard. Before the castle was placed a little looking-glass to represent a clear lake. This was

all very pretty; but the prettiest of all was a little lady, who stood at the open door of the castle; she was also cut out of paper, but she

had a dress of the clearest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon over her shoulders, that looked like a scarf; and in the middle of this ribbon was a shining tinsel rose as big as her whole face. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer; and as she was balanced on one leg when the Tin Soldier saw her, he thought that, like himself, she had but one leg.

"That would be the wife for me," thought he; "but she is very grand. She lives in a castle, and I have only a box. It is no place for her. But I must try to make acquaintance with her."

And then he lay down at full length behind a snuffbox which was on the table; there he could easily watch the little dainty lady, who continued to stand upon one leg without losing her balance.

When the evening came all the other tin soldiers were put into their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Now the toys began to play at "visiting," and at "war," and "giving balls."

The tin soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to join, but could not lift the lid. The nutcracker threw somersaults, and the pencil amused itself on the table; there was so much noise that the canary woke up, and began to speak too, and even in verse. The only two who did not stir from their places were the Tin Soldier and the Dancing Lady. She stood straight up on the point of her toes, and stretched out both her arms; and he was just as enduring on his one leg.

Now the clock struck twelve — and, bounce! the lid flew off the snuffbox; but there was no snuff in it, only a little black Goblin.

"Tin Soldier!" said the Goblin, "don't stare at things that don't concern you."

But the tin soldier pretended not to hear him.

"Just you wait till to-morrow!" said the Goblin.

But when the morning came, and the children got up, the Tin Soldier was placed in the window; and whether it was the Goblin or the draught that

did it, all at once the window flew open, and the Soldier fell head over heels out of the third story. That was a terrible passage! He put his leg straight up, and struck with helmet downward and his bayonet between the paving stones.

The servant maid and the little boy came down directly to look for him, but though they almost trod upon him, they could not see him. If the soldier had cried out, "Here I am!" they would have found him; but he did not think it fitting to call out loudly, because he was in uniform.

Now it began to rain; the drops soon fell thicker, and at last it came down in streams. When the rain was past, two street boys came by.

"Just look!" said one of them, "there lies a Tin Soldier. He must come and ride in a boat."

And they made a boat out of a newspaper, and put the Tin Soldier in the middle of it, and so he sailed down the gutter, and the two boys ran beside him and clapped their hands. Goodness

preserve us! how the waves rose in that gutter, and how fast the stream ran! The paper boat rocked up and down, and sometimes turned round so rapidly that the Tin Soldier trembled; but he remained firm, never changed countenance, looked straight before him, and shouldered his musket.

All at once the boat went into a long drain, and it became as dark as it was in his box.

"Where am I going now?" he thought. "Yes, yes, that's the Goblin's fault. Ah! if the little lady only sat here with me in the boat, it might be twice as dark for all that I should care."

Suddenly there came a great Water Rat, which lived under the drain.

"Have you a passport?" said the Rat.

But the Tin Soldier kept silence, and held his musket tighter than ever.

The boat went on, but the Rat came after it. Hu! how he gnashed his teeth, and called out to the bits of straw and wood.

"Hold him! hold him! He hasn't paid toll — he hasn't shown his passport!"

But the stream became stronger and stronger. The Tin Soldier could see the bright daylight where the arch ended; but he heard a roaring noise, which might well frighten a bolder man. Only think — just where the tunnel ended, the drain ran into a great canal!

Now he was already so near it that he could not stop. The boat was carried out, the poor Tin Soldier stiffening himself as much as he could, and no one could say that he moved an eyelid. The boat whirled round three or four times, and was full of water to the very edge — it must sink. The Tin Soldier stood up to his neck in water, and the boat sank deeper and deeper, and the paper was loosened more and more; and now the water closed over the soldier's head. Then he thought of the pretty Dancer, and how he should never see her again; and it sounded in his ears: —

Farewell, farewell, thou warrior brave,
For this day thou must die!

And now the paper parted, and the Tin Soldier fell out; but at that moment he was snapped up by a great fish.

Oh, how dark it was in that fish's body! It was even darker than in the drain tunnel. But the Tin Soldier remained unmoved, and lay at full length shouldering his musket.

The fish swam to and fro; he made the most wonderful movements, and then became quite still. At last something flashed and a voice said aloud, "The Tin Soldier!" The fish had been caught, carried to market, bought, and taken into the kitchen, where the cook cut him open with a large knife. She seized the Soldier round the body with both her hands, and carried him into the room, where all were anxious to see the remarkable man who had traveled about inside a fish. They placed him on the table, and

there — no! What curious things may happen in the world! The Tin Soldier was in the very room in which he had been before! He saw the same children, and the same toys stood on the table; and there was the pretty castle with the graceful Dancer. She was still balancing herself on one leg, and holding the other extended in the air. She was hardy, too. That moved the Tin Soldier; he was very nearly weeping tin tears, but that would not have been proper.

Then one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and flung him into the stove. He gave no reason for this. It must have been the Goblin's fault.

The Tin Soldier stood there quite illuminated, and felt a heat that was terrible; but whether this heat proceeded from the real fire or from love, he did not know. The colors had quite gone off from him; but whether that had happened on the journey, or had been caused by grief, no one could say. He looked at the little lady, she

looked at him, and he felt that he was melting; but he still stood firm, shouldering his musket. Then suddenly the door flew open, the draught of air caught the Dancer, and she flew like a sylph just into the stove to the Tin Soldier, flashed up in a flame, and was gone. Then the Tin Soldier melted down into a lump; and when the servant maid took the ashes out next day, she found him in the shape of a little tin heart. But of the Dancer nothing remained but the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

—Hans Christian Andersen.

WISHING

Ring ting! I wish I were a Primrose,
A bright yellow Primrose, blowing in the spring!
The stooping bough above me,
The wandering bee to love me,
The fern and moss to creep across,
And the Elm Tree for our king!

Nay — stay! I wish I were an Elm Tree,
A great lofty Elm Tree, with green leaves gay!
The winds would set them dancing,
The sun and moonshine glance in,
And birds would house among the boughs,
And sweetly sing.

Oh — no! I wish I were a Robin,
A Robin, or a little Wren, everywhere to go,
Through forest, field, or garden,
And ask no leave or pardon,
Till winter comes with icy thumbs
To ruffle up our wing!

Well — tell! where should I fly to,
Where to sleep in the dark wood or dell?
Before the day was over,
Home must come the rover,
For mother's kiss, — sweeter this
Than any other thing.

— William Allingham.

THE MERRY RAIN

Sprinkle, sprinkle, comes the rain,
Tapping on the window pane;
Trickling, coursing,
Crowding, forcing
Tiny rills
To the dripping window sills.

Laughing raindrops, light and swift,
Through the air they fall and sift;
Dancing, tripping,
Bounding, skipping
Through the street,
With their thousand merry feet.

* * * * * *

In the woods, by twig and spray,
To the roots they find their way;
Rushing, creeping,
Doubling, leaping,
Down they go
To the waiting life below.

Oh, the brisk and merry rain,
Bringing gladness in its train!
Falling, glancing,
Tinkling, dancing
All around,
Listen to its cheery sound!

THE CZAR AND THE ANGEL

Somewhere, nowhere, in a certain kingdom, in a certain empire, time out of mind, and in no land of ours, dwelt a Czar who was so proud, so very proud, that he feared neither God nor man. He listened to no good counsel from whithersoever it might come, but did only that which was good in his own eyes. And all his ministers and nobles grieved sorely, and all the people grieved likewise.

One day this Czar went to church; the priest was reading from Holy Scripture, and so he needs must listen. Now there were certain words there which pleased him not. "To say such

words to me!" thought he. After service the Czar went home, and bade them send the priest to him. The priest came.

"How durst thou read such and such passages to me?" said the Czar.

"They were written to be read, O Czar."

"Written, indeed! And wouldst thou then read everything that is written? Smear those places over with grease, and never dare to read them again, I say!"

"'Tis not I who have written those words, your Majesty," said the priest; "nor is it for such as I to smear them over."

"What! thou dost presume to teach me? I am the Czar, and it is thy duty to obey me."

"In all things will I obey thee, O Czar, save only in sacred things. God is over them, men cannot alter them."

"Not alter them!" roared the Czar; "if I wish them altered, altered they must be. Strike out

those words instantly, I say, and never dare read them in church again. Dost hear?"

"I dare not," said the priest; "I have no will in the matter."

"I command thee, fellow!"

"I dare not, O Czar!"

"Well," said the Czar, "I'll give thee three days to think about it, and on the evening of the fourth day appear before me, and I'll strike thy head from thy shoulders if thou dost not obey me!"

Then the priest bowed low and went home.

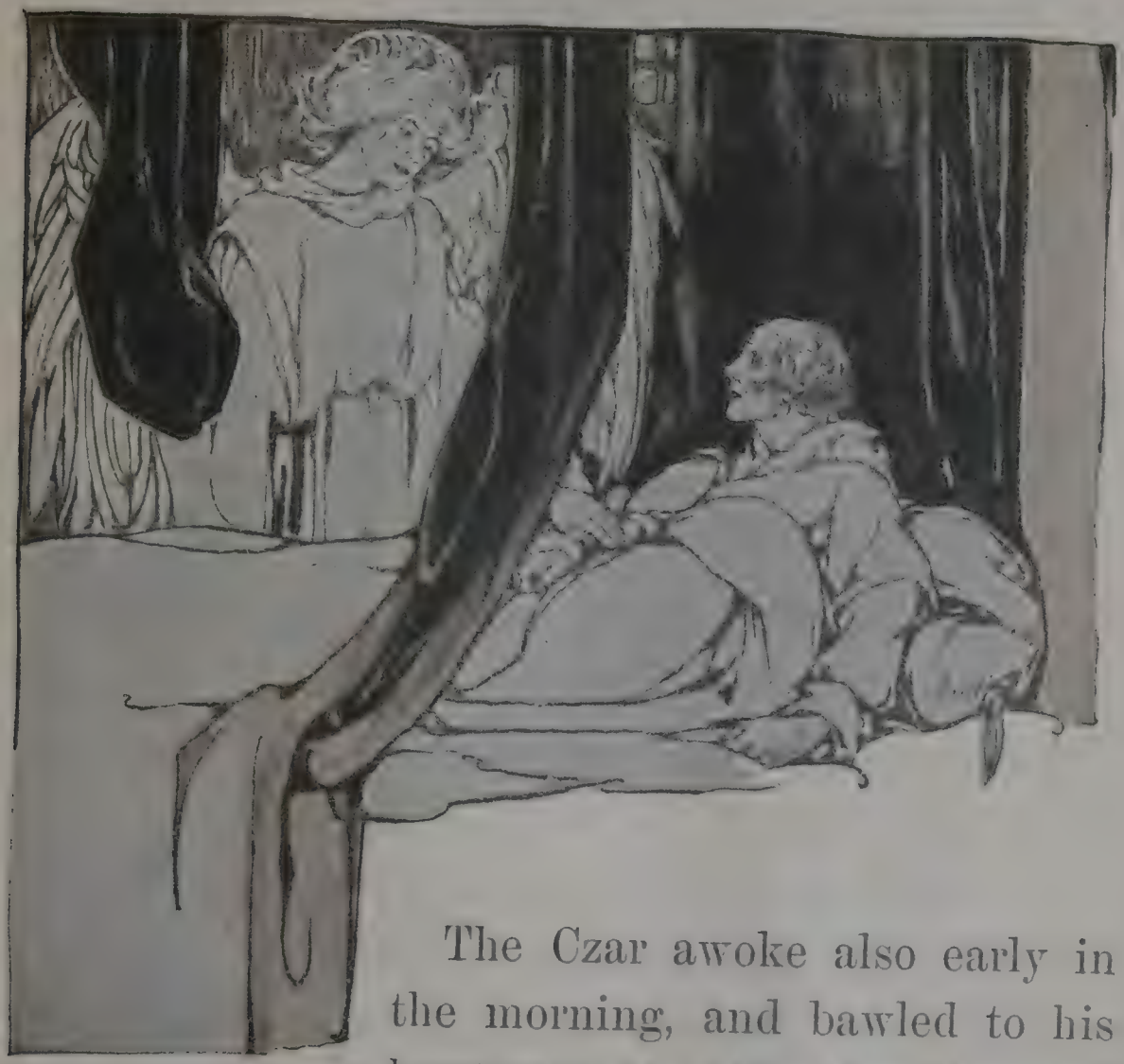
The third day was already drawing to a close and the priest knew not what to do. He walked about, and wept, and wrung his hands:—

"Oh, woe is me! woe is me!"

At last he lay down, but sleep he could not. Only toward dawn did he doze off; then he saw in a dream an angel standing at his head.

"Fear nothing!" said the angel. "God hath sent me down on earth to protect thee!"

So early in the morning the priest rose up full of joy and prayed gratefully to God.



The Czar awoke also early in the morning, and bawled to his huntsmen to gather together and go hunting with him in the forest.

So away they went hunting in the forest, and it was not long before a stag leaped out of the thicket beneath the very eyes of the Czar. Off after it went the Czar; every moment the stag seemed to be faltering, and yet the Czar could never quite come up with it. Hot with excitement, the Czar spurred his horse on yet faster.

A stream crossed the road, and the stag plunged into the water. The Czar was a good swimmer.

"I've got him now, at any rate," thought he. "A little longer, and I shall hold him by the horns."

So the Czar took off his clothes, and into the water he plunged after the stag. But the stag swam across to the opposite bank, and the Czar was extending his hand to seize him by the horns — when there was no longer any stag to be seen! It was the angel who had taken the form of a stag. The Czar was amazed. He looked about him on every side, and wondered where the stag had gone. Then he saw some one on the other

side of the river, putting on his clothes, and presently the man mounted his horse and galloped away. The Czar thought it was some evildoer, but it was the self-same angel that had now put on the Czar's clothes, and gone away to collect the huntsmen and take them home. As for the Czar, he remained all naked and alone in the forest.

At last he looked about him and saw, far, far away, smoke rising above the forest.

"Maybe," thought he, "that is my hunting pavilion."

So he went in the direction of the smoke, and came at last to a brick kiln. The brick burners came forth to meet him, and were amazed to see a naked man.

"What is he doing here?" they thought.

And they saw that his feet were lame and bruised, and his body covered with scratches.

"Give me to drink," said he, "and I would fain eat something also."

The brick burners had pity on him; they gave him an old tattered garment to wear, and a piece of black bread and a gherkin to eat. Never from the day of his birth had the Czar had such a tasty meal.

"And now speak, O man!" said they; "who art thou?"

"I'll tell you who I am," said he, when he had eaten his fill, "I am your Czar. Lead me to my capital, and there I will reward you!"

"What, thou wretched rogue!" they cried. "Thou dost presume to mock us, thou old ragamuffin, and magnify thyself into a czar! Thou reward us, indeed!" And they looked at him in amazement and scorn.

"Dare to laugh at me again," said he, "and I'll have your heads chopped off!" For he forgot himself, and thought he was at home.

"What! Thou!"

Then they fell upon him, and beat him.

They beat him and hauled him about very roughly; then they drove him away. Off he went bellowing through the forest.

He went on and on till at last he saw once more a smoke rising up out of the wood.

"That is surely my hunting pavilion," thought he again, and so he went up to it.

Toward evening he came to another brick kiln. There, too, they had pity upon him and kindly treated him. They gave him to eat and to drink. They also gave him ragged hose and a tattered shirt, for they were very poor people. They took him to be a runaway soldier, or some other poor man; but when he had eaten his fill and clothed himself he stood before them.

"I am your Czar!" said he.

They laughed at him, and again he began to talk roughly to the people. Then they fell upon him and thrashed him soundly, and drove him right away. And he wandered all by himself

through the forest till it was night. Then he laid him down beneath a tree, and so he passed the night, and rising up very early, fared on his way straight before him.

At last he came to a third brick kiln, but he did not tell the brick burners there that he was the Czar. All he thought of now was how he might reach his capital. The people here, too, treated him kindly, and seeing that his feet were lame and bruised they pitied him, and gave him a pair of very old boots.

"Do ye know by which way I can get to the capital?" he asked them.

They told him; but it was a long, long journey that would take the whole day.

So he went the way they had told him, and he went on and on till he came to a little town, and there the roadside sentries stopped him.

"Who art thou, old man?" they asked. Then he told them the whole truth.

"Once I was the Czar," said he, and he related all that had befallen him. Then they were much amazed, for he was not at all like a Czar. So they made up their minds that he was crazy, and drove him away.

Never did any man feel so wretched on God's earth as did that wretched Czar. Willingly would he have done any sort of work if he had only known how, but he had never been used to work, so he had to go along begging his bread. He lay at night at the first place that came to hand, sometimes in the tall grass of the steppes, sometimes beneath a fence.

"That it should ever have come to this!" he sighed.

But the angel, who had made himself Czar, went home with the huntsmen. And no man knew that he was not a Czar, but an angel. The same evening the priest came to him and said:—

"Do thy will, O Czar, and strike off my head. I cannot blot out one word of Holy Scripture."

"Glory be to God," cried the Czar, "for now I know that there is at least one priest in my czardom who stands firm for God's word. I'll make thee the highest bishop in this realm."

The priest thanked him, bowed down to the earth, and departed, marveling.

"What is this wonder," thought he, "that the Czar should have become so just and gentle?"

But all men marveled at the change that had come over the Czar. He was now so mild and gracious. He did not spend all his days in the forest, but went about inquiring of his people if any were wronged or injured by their neighbors, and if justice were done.

But the real Czar, the real Czar grew more and more wretched. Then, after ten years, a ukase went forth that on such and such a day all the people were to come together to a great

banquet given by the Czar; all were to be there, rich and poor, high and lowly. The people came, and the unhappy Czar came too. And they all

sat down at table and ate and drank, and the angel Czar himself and his courtiers distributed

the meat and drink to the guests; but to the unfortunate Czar they gave a double portion of everything. And they all ate and drank their fill, and then the Czar began to inquire of the people whether any had suffered wrong or had not had justice done him.

Then the people began to depart. The unlucky Czar was also on the point of going, when the angel Czar stopped him and said to him: —

"Lo! God hath tried thee and humbled thy pride these ten years. But me He sent to teach thee that a Czar must listen to the complaints of his people. So thou wast made poor and a vagabond on the face of the earth that thou mightest pick up wisdom. Look now, that thou doest good to thy people, and judgest righteous judgment, as from henceforth thou shalt be Czar again; but I must fly back to God in heaven."

When the angel had said this he was no more to be seen; only his clothes remained.

THE FERRY FOR SHADOWTOWN

Sway to and fro in the twilight gray;
This is the ferry for Shadowtown;
It always sails at the end of the day,
Just as the darkness closes down.

Rest, little head, on my shoulder so;
A sleepy kiss is the only fare;
Drifting away from the world we go,
Baby and I in the rocking chair.

See, where the fire logs glow and spark,
Glitter the lights of the shadowland;
The raining drops on the window — hark! —
Are ripples lapping upon its strand.

There, where the mirror is glancing dim,
A lake lies shimmering, cool and still;
Blossoms are waving above its brim,
Those over there on the window sill.

Rock slow, more slow, in the dusky light,
Silently lower the anchor down.
Dear little passenger, say "Good night!"
We've reached the harbor for Shadowtown!

GOOD NIGHT

Now fades the sun, and one by one
The stars gleam soft and fair;
No robin sings, no swallow wings
Its eager flight in air.

But only silent dews distill,
To fall in fairy rain;
And only whispering breezes thrill
The hush of grove and plain.

The lily slumbers on the lake,
Where not a ripple stirs;
The hare lies crouched amid the brake,
The partridge 'neath the firs.

And down the lawn the roses droop
Their crimson and their snow;
And poppies hide their scarlet pride
And wait the hour to blow.

Good night! good night! the moon will light
The east before the dawn;

And stars arise to gem the skies
Where these have journeyed on.
Good night! and sweetest dreams be thine
Through all their shining way,
Till darkness goes, and bird and rose
With rapture greet the day.

—Edna Dean Proctor.

datacolor

THE ALDINE READERS

A THIRD READER

SPAULDING & BRYCE